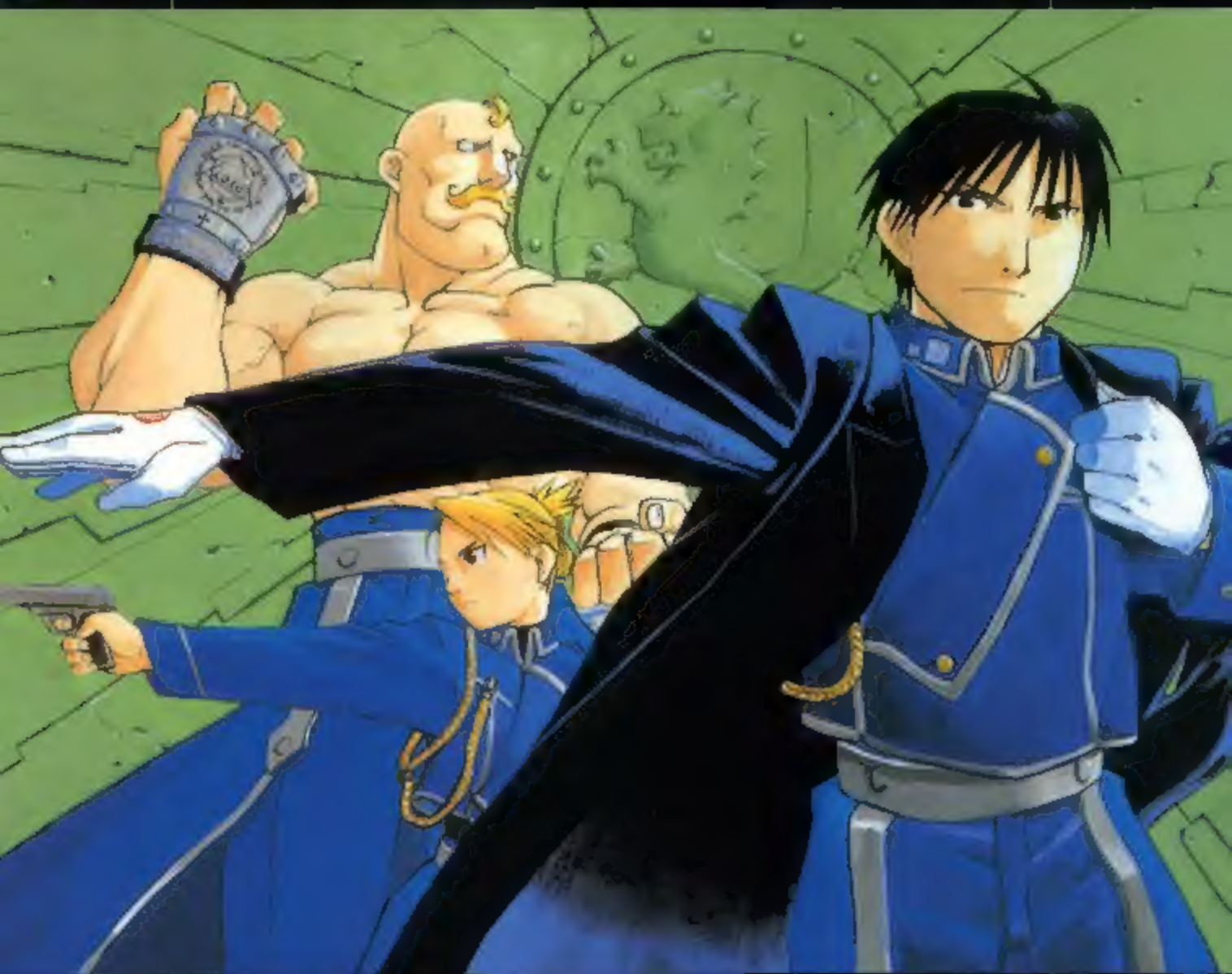
はがねのれんきんじゅつし

鋼の錬金術師

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST



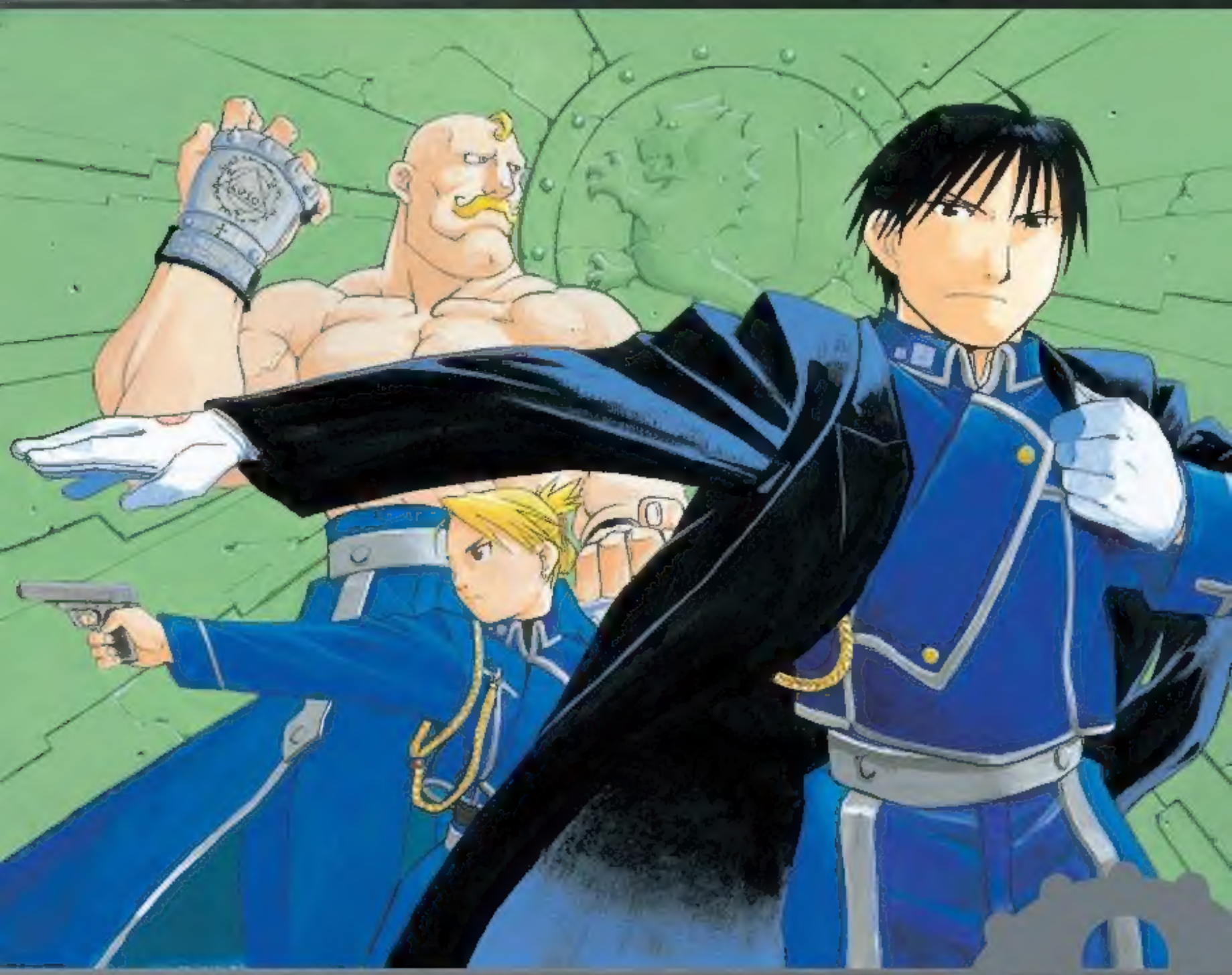
荒川 弘

Hiromu Arakawa

3

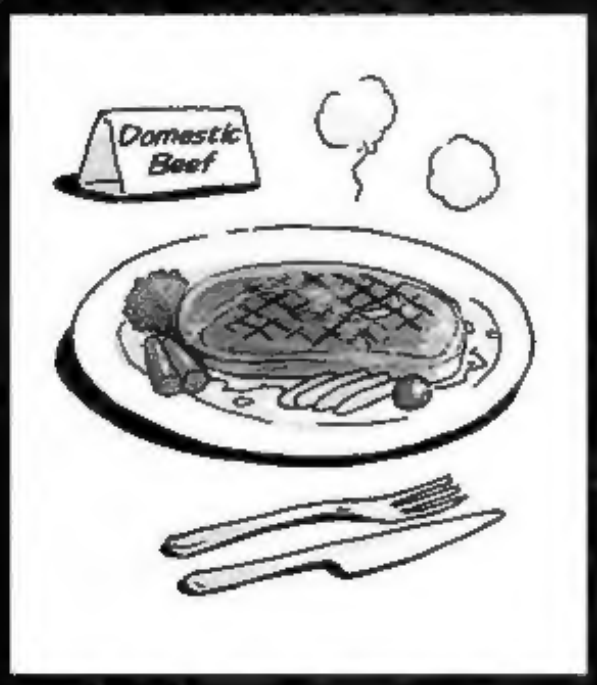
GANGAN COMICS

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST™



3

Story and art by
Hiromu Arakawa



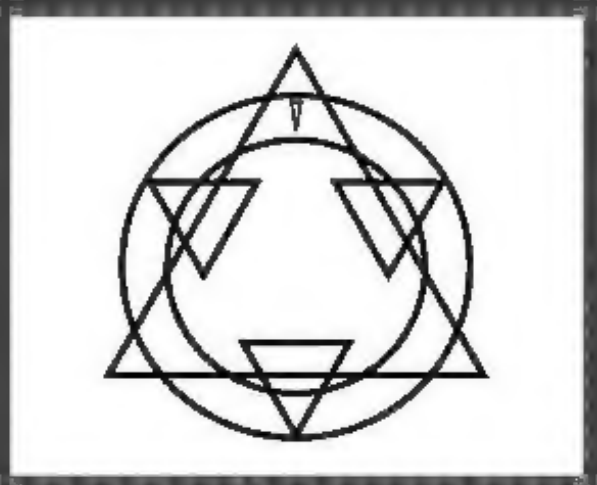
"I love to read manga!"

"I love to draw manga so much I don't know what to do!"

"I draw, therefore I am!"

"That's all the proof I need to know that I exist!!!"

—Hiromu Arakawa, 2002



Born in Hokkaido (northern Japan), Hiromu Arakawa first attracted national attention in 1999 with her award-winning manga Stray Dog. Her series Fullmetal Alchemist debuted in 2001 in Square Enix's monthly manga anthology Shonen Gangan.

FULLMETAL
ALCHEMIST

鋼の錬金術師

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST

3

荒川弘

HIROMU ARAKAWA

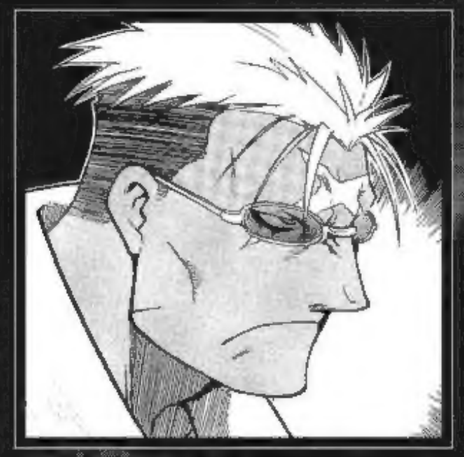
鋼の錬金術師

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST

CHARACTERS
FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST

■ ウィンリィ・ロックベル

Winry Rockbell



■ 傷の男(スカー)

Scar

■ グラトニー

Gluttony

■ ラスト

Lust

■ アルフォンス・エルリック

Alphonse Elric

■ エドワード・エルリック

Edward Elric

■ アレックス・ルイ・アームストロング

Alex Louis Armstrong

■ ロイ・マスタング

Roy Mustang

OUTLINE
FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST

Using a forbidden alchemical ritual, the Elric brothers attempted to bring their dead mother back to life. But the ritual went wrong, consuming Edward Elric's leg and Alphonse Elric's entire body. At the cost of his arm, Edward was able to graft his brother's soul into a suit of armor. Equipped with mechanical "auto-mail" to replace his missing limbs, Edward becomes a state alchemist, serving the military on deadly missions. Now, the two brothers roam the world in search of a way to regain what they have lost...

During a near-fatal encounter with an assassin named Scar, Edward's auto-mail arm is destroyed and Alphonse is incapacitated. Escorted by Major Armstrong, the damaged Elric brothers return to their hometown for repairs...

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WOW, THAT FEELS GREAT! I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU, DR. PINAKO.

CREAK CREAK

THERE. ALL DONE.

CREAK

HA HA... YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?

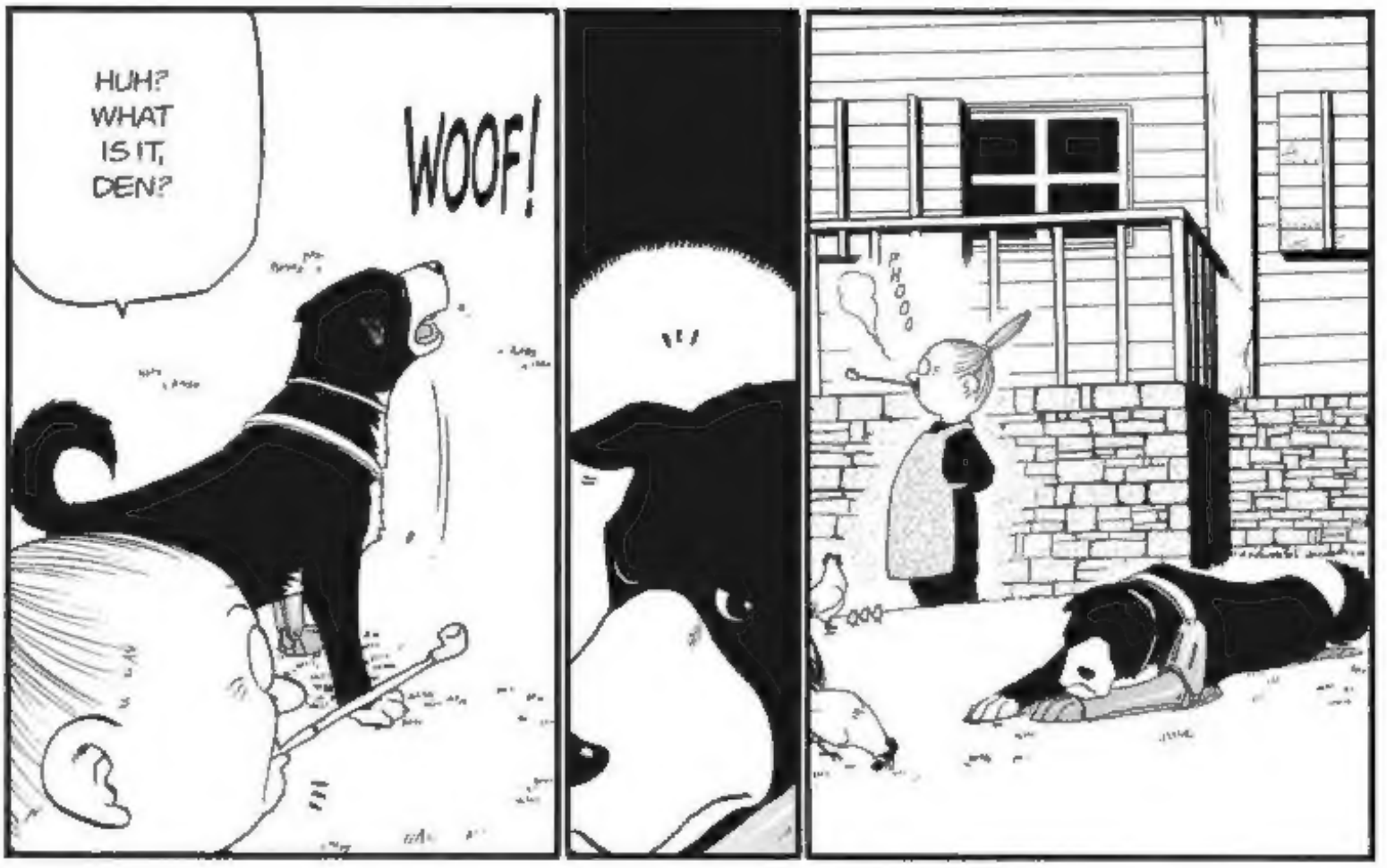
HAVE YOU CONSIDERED UPGRADING TO AN ***AUTO-MAIL*** PROSTHETIC ?

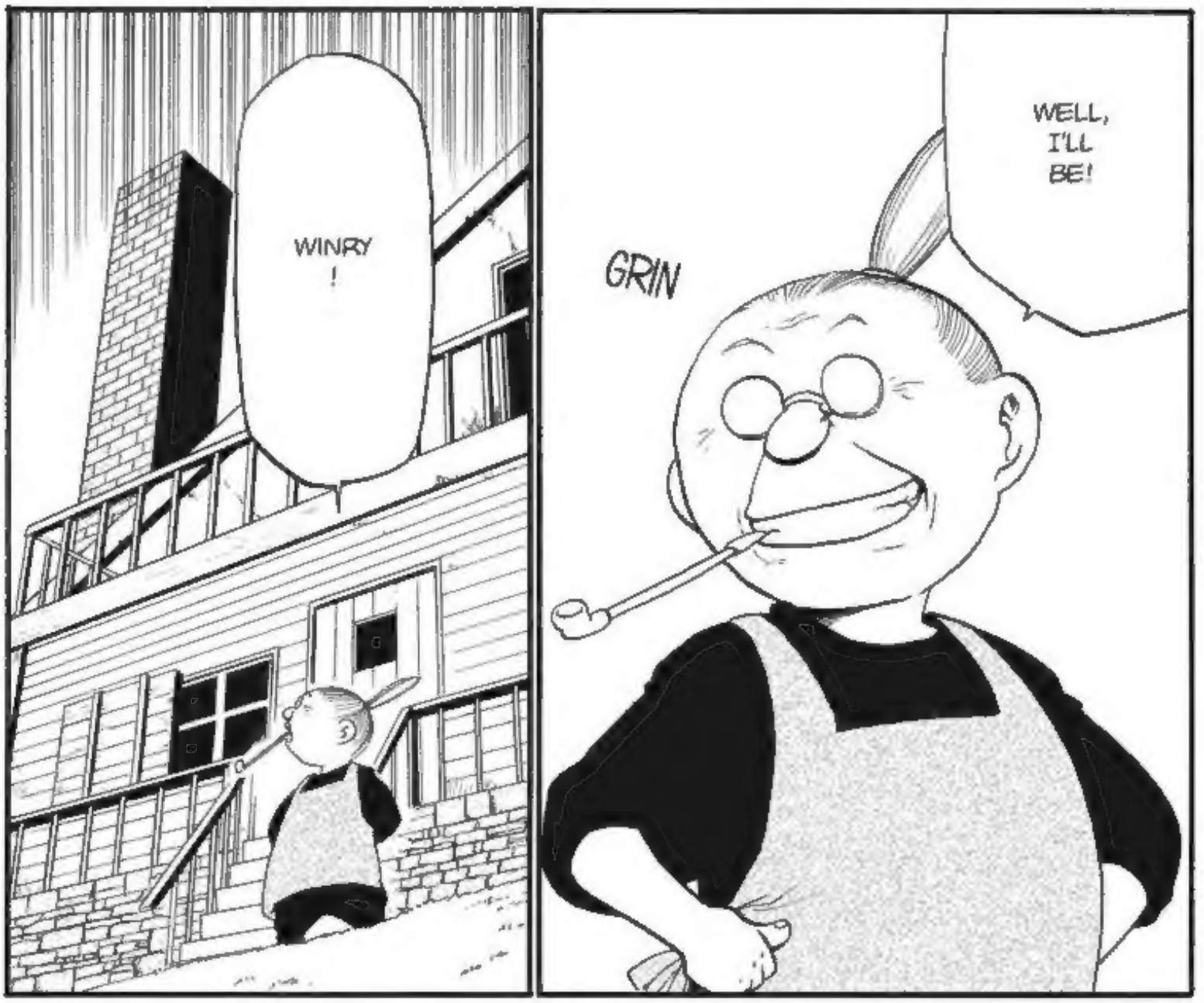
I'M NOT ***THAT*** BRAVE.

SEE YA.

FOR A GROWN MAN, YOU'RE QUITE A BABY. I KNOW A LITTLE BRAT WHO ENDURED AUTO-MAIL GRAFTING OF BOTH HIS RIGHT ARM AND LEFT LEG AT THE ***SAME TIME.***

SURE, THEY'RE CONVENIENT, BUT I HEAR THE POST-SURGICAL PAIN IS TERRIBLE AND THE REHABILITATION PROCESS IS REALLY DIFFICULT.


HUH? WHAT IS IT, DEN?
WOOF!
PHOOO


WINRY !
WELL, I'LL BE!
GRIN

OUR REGULARS ARE HERE!

WINRY!

HMM... THEY SEEM LIKE THEY'RE DOING WELL.

Chapter 9: A Home with a Family Waiting

IS IT JUST ME, OR SINCE THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU, ED...

Object of Contrast

...HAVE YOU GOTTEN A LOT SMALLER ?

PINAKO ROCKBELL. PLEASED TO MEET YOU.

THIS IS MAJOR ARM-STRONG.

HI DEN. LONG TIME NO SEE.

MICRO-MINI GRANNY !!

CHIBI-CHUMP !!

YOU HEARD ME, GUPPY GEEZER !!

WHAT DID YOU CALL ME, YOU LITTLE RUNT ?!

WHO'RE YOU CALLING "SMALL," YOU HALF-PINT HAG?!

THAT IDIOT !

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP
CLOMP
CLOMP

I *TOLD* THEM TIME AND TIME AGAIN TO *CALL* BEFORE THEY SHOW UP...

CLONK

GOUCH

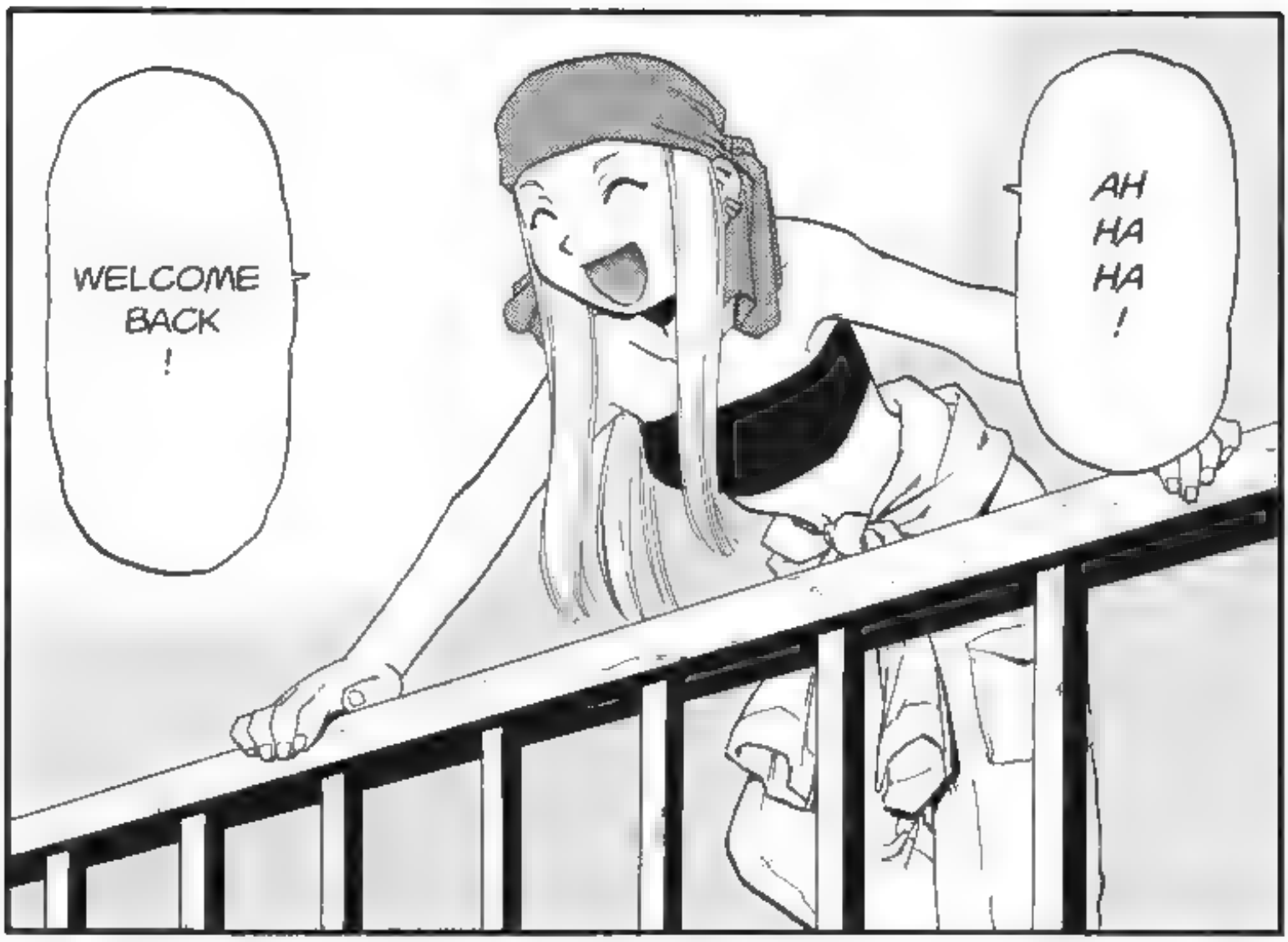
HEY!! ED !!

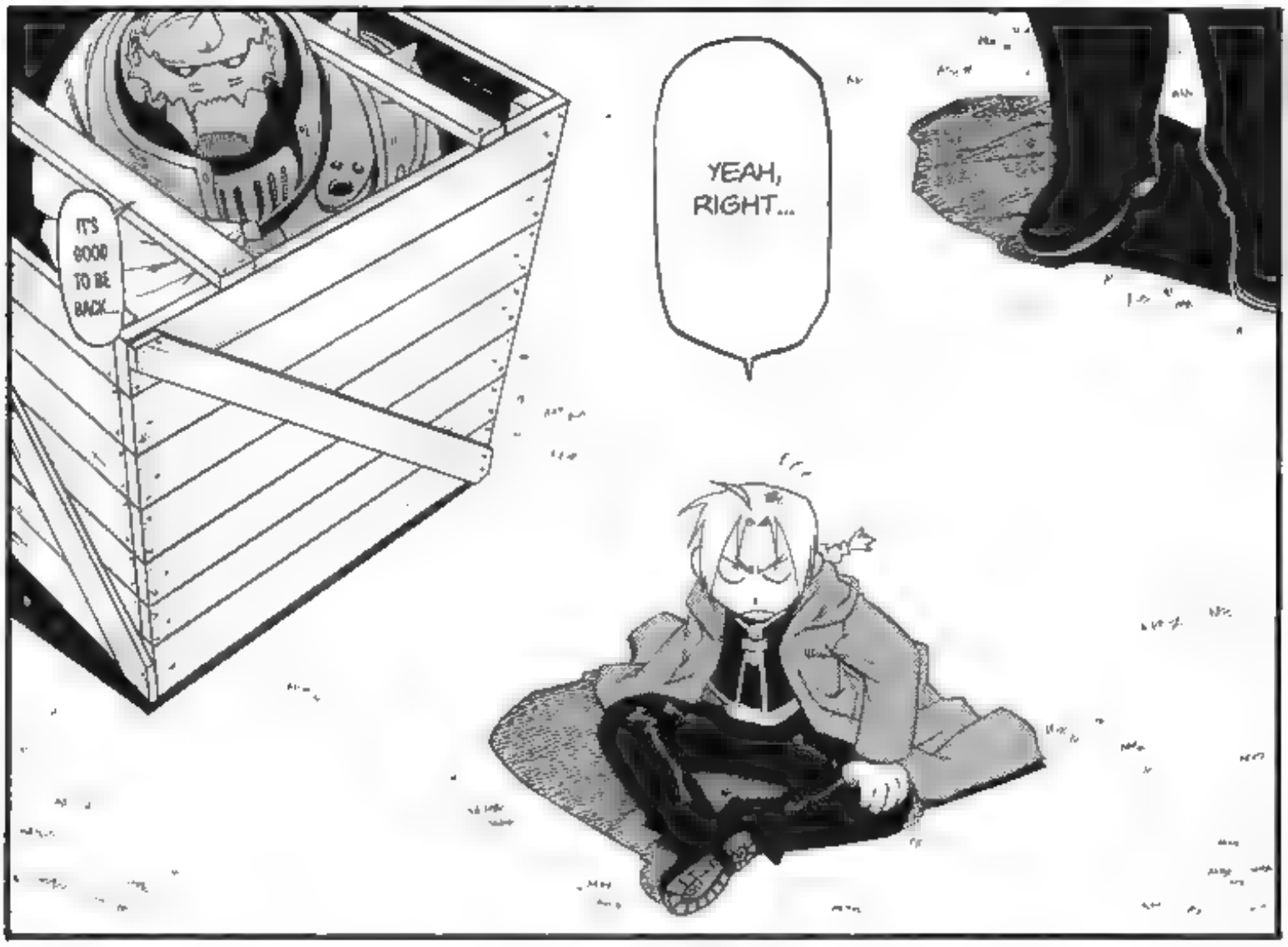
HUH ?!

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU TO *CALL* BEFORE YOU COME IN FOR MAINTENANCE!!

YOU COULDA KILLED ME !

WINRY, YOU JERK !


WELCOME BACK !
AH HA HA !


IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK...
YEAH, RIGHT...

YEAH, SORRY. IT GOT BROKEN.

WHAAA——?!!

AHH...

SWOON SWOON

YEAH, WHEN I SAID "BROKEN," WHAT I MEANT WAS "SMASHED TO BITS."

HAHAHA

THAT WAS MY ***MASTER-PIECE!*** A STATE-OF-THE-ART AUTO-MAIL PROSTHETIC. GAH! JUST LET ME SEE THE DAMAGE SO I CAN FIX IT AND GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

WHAT DO YOU ***MEAN,*** "IT GOT BROKEN"?!

UH...

WHAT KIND OF ***LIFESTYLE*** DO YOU TWO LEAD?

AND WHAT'S THIS? YOU WENT AND BROKE AL, TOO?

YUP. WE'RE REALLY IN A RUSH.

I SEE. SO, YOU'RE TRYING TO GET TO CENTRAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO GATHER DATA ON THIS "PHILOSOPHER'S STONE"?

SO YOU'VE GOTTEN A LITTLE TALLER, AFTER ALL.

LAST TIME I SAW YOU, YOU WERE JUST CM TALL.

HMM... AFTER WE REBUILD THE ARM, YOUR LEG NEEDS TO BE ADJUSTED, TOO.

SUU

WHAT? SO IT'S GONNA TAKE ABOUT A WEEK?

YOUR OLD LEG CAN STILL BE USED, BUT YOUR ARM HAS TO BE REBUILT FROM SCRATCH SO...

I'LL HAVE IT FOR YOU IN *THREE DAYS.*

PHOOO

DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME.

OKAY.

IN THE MEANTIME, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO WEAR THIS SPARE.

KA-

CHAK

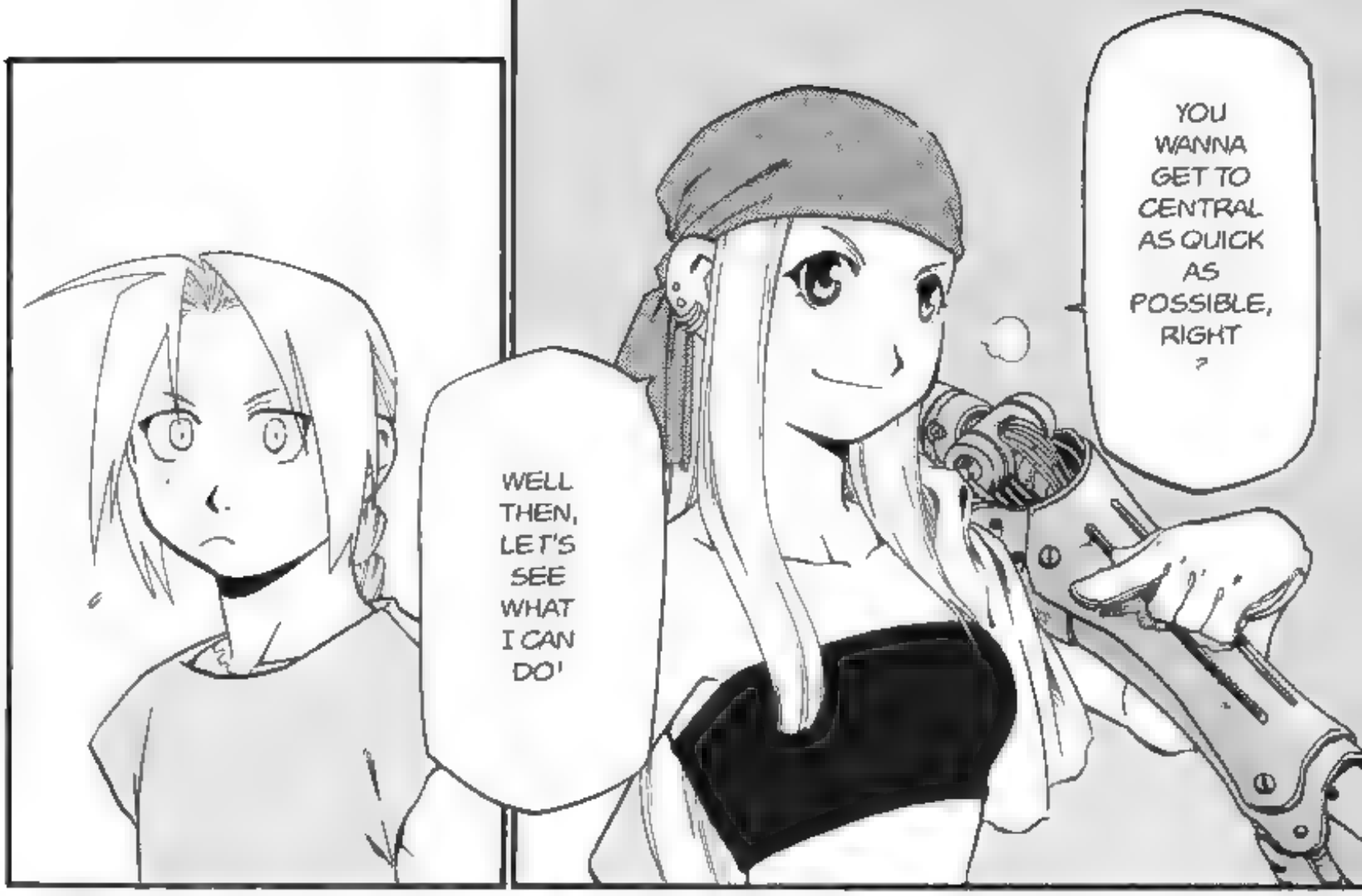
SORRY ABOUT THAT.

AW, MAN. IT'S GONNA BE AN ALL-NIGHTER FOR SURE.

AFTER I'VE CRAFTED ALL THE PARTS, I HAVE TO ASSEMBLE EVERY-THING. THEN THERE'S ALL THE CONNECTIONS TO CHECK AND ADJUSTMENTS TO MAKE...

WHOA..

IT'S HARD TO WALK ON A LEG THAT I'M NOT USED TO.


YOU WANNA GET TO CENTRAL AS QUICK AS POSSIBLE, RIGHT?
WELL THEN, LET'S SEE WHAT I CAN DO!

OOPS.
I FORGOT YOU'RE NOT USED TO THAT LEG.
SMACK
BUT FOR A RUSH JOB LIKE THIS, YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO PAY EXTRA!

DON'T ACT LIKE YOU'RE SURPRISED...
HAHAHA
SHEESH.. WHAT'S WITH THAT VIOLENT WOMAN?!

SIGH... THREE DAYS, HUH?

FWUMP

KAW

SHF SHF

THAT'S FOR SURE...

I'M NOT THE KIND OF PERSON WHO TAKES IT EASY!

FWAPPA FWAPPA

THINGS HAVE BEEN SO ROUGH LATELY, MAYBE TAKING IT EASY'S NOT SUCH A BAD THING, RIGHT?

IT'S SO *BORING* AROUND HERE. NOTHING TO DO...

THERE'S NOT EVEN A LIBRARY

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU'RE IN NO CONDITION TO GO ANYWHERE.

VISIT MOM'S GRAVE, HUH...?

I KNOW! IF YOU'RE THAT BORED, WHY DON'T YOU GO VISIT MOM'S GRAVE?

YOU SHOULDN'T MISS THIS OPPOR-TUNITY TO GO PAY YOUR RE-SPECTS.

WE'RE LEAVING FOR CENTRAL AS SOON AS THE AUTO-MAIL'S FINISHED, RIGHT?

I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO ASK THE MAJOR TO CARRY ME, SO I'LL JUST STAY HERE.

I GUESS I'LL GO OVER THERE FOR A LITTLE BIT.

YOU'RE RIGHT...

KA

HYA!

RA

K

HE'S VISITING HIS MOTHER'S GRAVE.

BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW WHERE EDWARD ELRIC IS? I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR A WHILE.

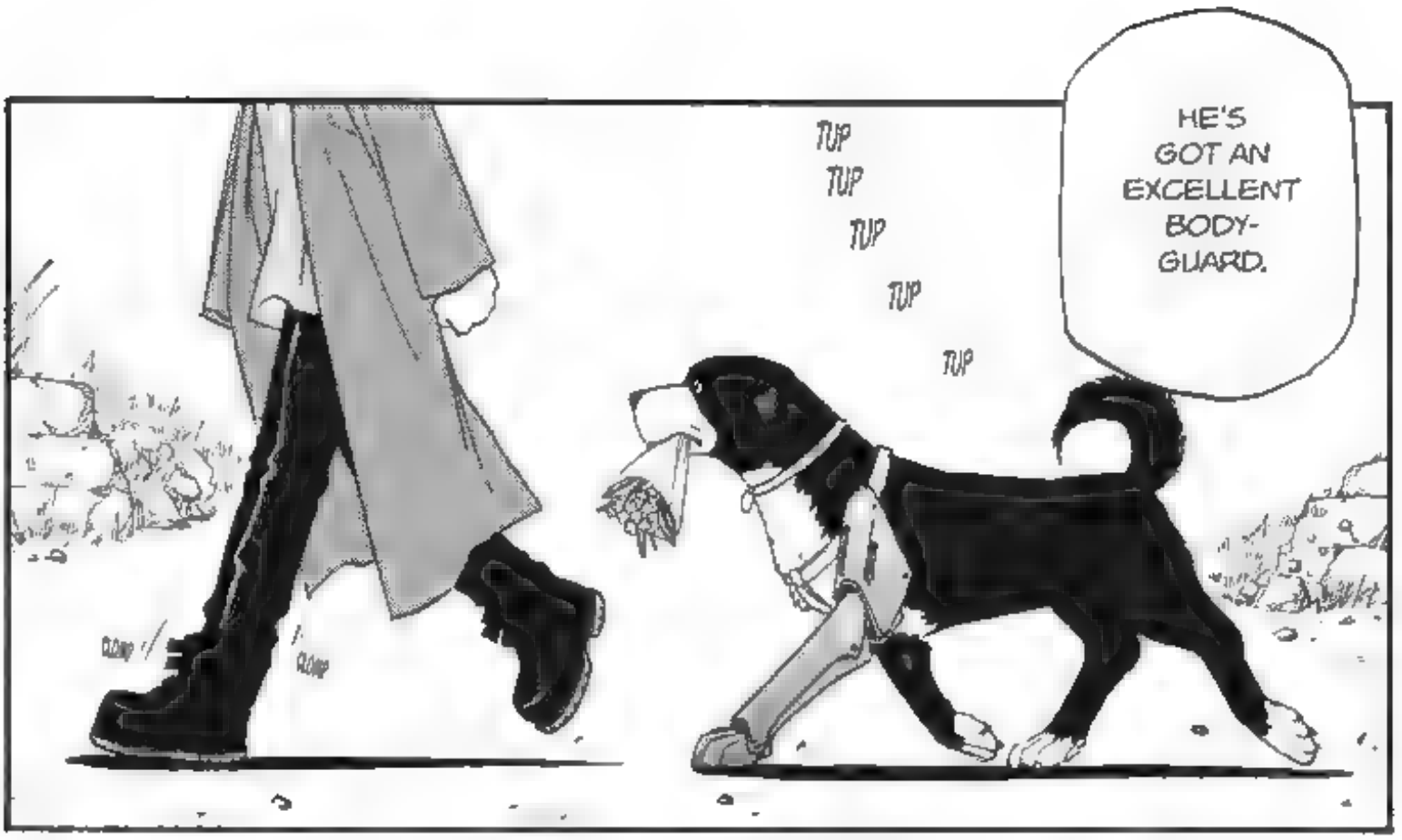
WHY, THANK YOU, YOUNG MAN.

THE FIREWOOD HAS BEEN SPLIT, MS. PINAKO.

HE'LL BE *FINE.*

KEH KEH KEH

I TOLD HIM IT WAS TOO DANGEROUS TO WALK AROUND BY HIMSELF..!

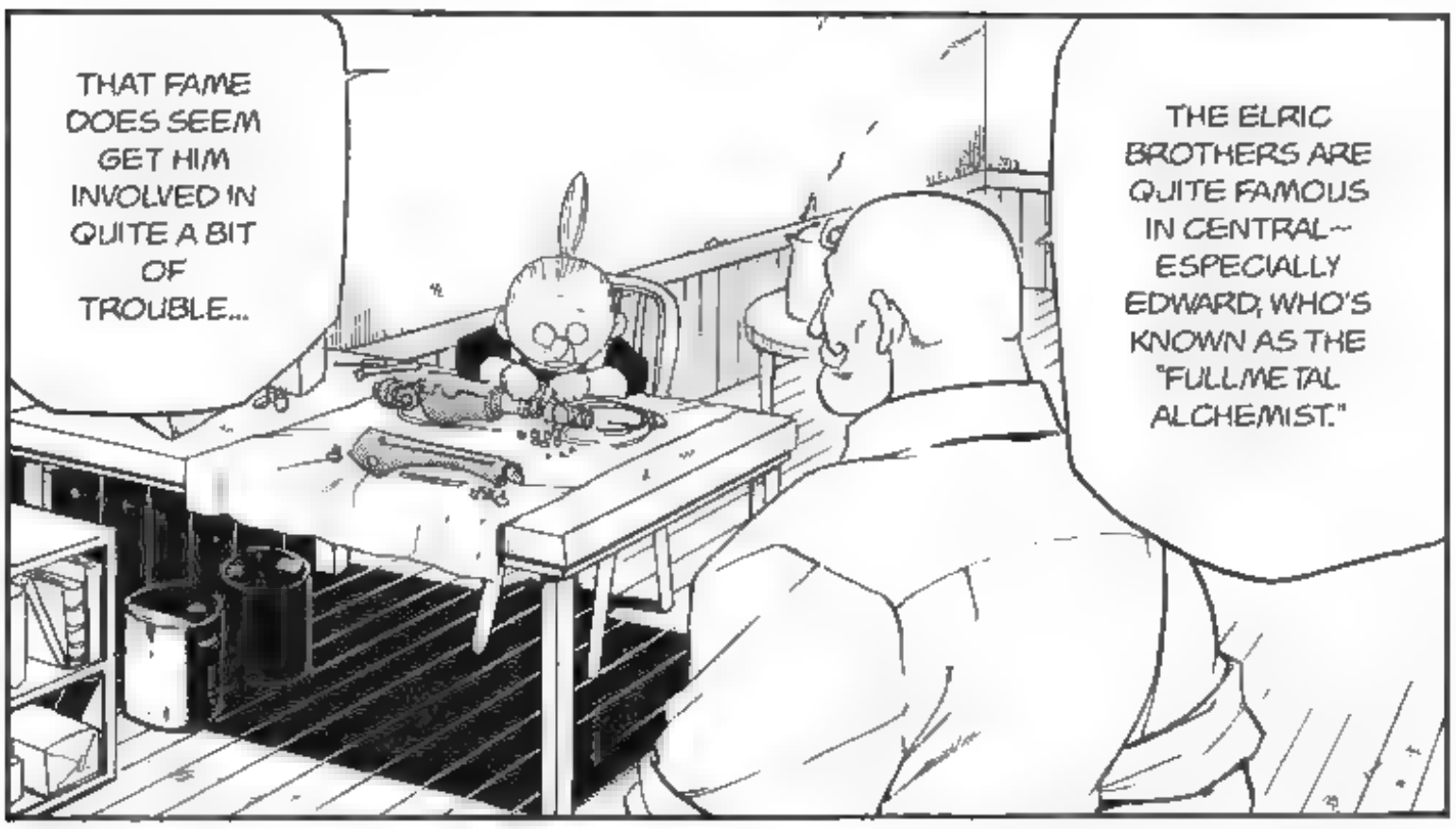

HE'S GOT AN EXCELLENT BODY-GUARD.
TUP
TUP
TUP
TUP
TUP
CLOMP
CLOMP

LONG TIME NO SEE!
HEY, EDWARD! WHAT'RE YOU DOING BACK?

MAJOR...DO THOSE TWO BOYS LIVE A PEACEFUL LIFE?
SEE YA
COME SEE US ONCE IN A WHILE

YOU STILL DOING THAT GOVERN-MENT WHATEVER JOB?
DON'T CALL ME SMALL "
WA HA HA
YOU'RE STILL SMALL AS EVER.

WE DON'T GET A LOT OF NEWS FROM THE CITY, AND THOSE BOYS HAVEN'T WRITTEN US A SINGLE LETTER. I WORRY ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE TO DEAL WITH OUT THERE.
AS YOU CAN SEE, WE LIVE A SIMPLE LIFE OUT HERE IN THE COUNTRY.


THAT FAME DOES SEEM GET HIM INVOLVED IN QUITE A BIT OF TROUBLE...
THE ELRIC BROTHERS ARE QUITE FAMOUS IN CENTRAL— ESPECIALLY EDWARD, WHO'S KNOWN AS THE "FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST."

STRONG, HUH ?
I WOULDN'T WORRY, THOUGH. THOSE BROTHERS ARE STRONG.

GRANNY! MY BROTHER...

PLEASE HELP MY BROTHER !!

IT WAS THERE FOUR YEARS AGO WHEN HE SACRIFICED HIS OWN ARM TO TRANSMUTE HIS BROTHER'S SOUL...

I'VE SEEN THAT STRENGTH.

GRANNY, I'M GONNA BE A STATE ALCHEMIST...

...WHEN HE DECIDED TO BECOME A DOG OF THE MILITARY AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE...

...AND WHEN HE ENDURED THE AUTO-MAIL SURGERY THAT WOULD EVEN MAKE AN ADULT HOWL IN PAIN.

...SO GIVE ME AN ARM AND A LEG SO I CAN WALK AND DO THINGS BY MYSELF.

AND BECAUSE HE'S SO STRONG, I WORRY THAT WHEN HE FINALLY DOES FIND AN OBSTACLE HE CAN'T OVERCOME, WILL HE BE ABLE TO GET BACK ON HIS FEET?

I WONDERED WHERE IN THAT LITTLE BODY ALL THAT STRENGTH WAS COMING FROM.

AFTER ALL, THEIR FATHER WAS AN OLD DRINKING BUDDY OF MINE.

THEY'RE LIKE GRAND-CHILDREN TO YOU, AREN'T THEY, MS. PINAKO?

UH-HUH. I'VE WATCHED THEM GROW UP FROM THE TIME THEY WERE BORN.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF HE'S ALIVE OR DEAD.

I WONDER WHERE THAT MAN COULD BE AFTER LEAVING HIS WIFE, KIDS, AND THIS VILLAGE BEHIND...?

SPEAKING OF FATHERS, WHERE ARE WINRY'S PARENTS?

THEY DIED IN THE ISHBALAN CIVIL WAR.

THEY NEVER CAME BACK.

WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT, THEY WERE CALLED TO THE BATTLEFIELD BECAUSE THERE WEREN'T ENOUGH DOCTORS.

THAT GIRL'S PARENTS— MY SON AND HIS WIFE— WERE SURGEONS.

...IT WAS... A TERRIBLE WAR.

BUT ON THE OTHER HAND...***EVERYONE*** DIDN'T DIE. A LOT OF PEOPLE JUST LOST THEIR ARMS AND LEGS. NOW THEY RELY ON PROSTHETICS ENGINEERS LIKE US TO HELP THEM.

YUP. A TERRIBLE WAR.

THE WAR THAT TOOK OUR FAMILY AWAY IS THE SAME WAR THAT ALLOWS US TO EARN OUR BREAD.

NOW ***THAT'S*** IRONY.

NO, MADAME I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO TROUBLE YOURSELF ON ***MY*** ACCOUNT...

KEH KEH KEH

WITH A BIG STRAPPING FELLA LIKE YOU, I'D BETTER MAKE EXTRA!

AND SPEAKING OF BREAD, I BETTER START GETTING DINNER READY.

OH !

IF THIS IS THEIR HOMETOWN, THEN DON'T THEY HAVE THEIR OWN HOUSE?

NO-WHERE ELSE TO STAY...?

ANYWAY, THOSE BROTHERS DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE ELSE TO STAY. IT DON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE WHETHER IT'S TWO OR THREE PEOPLE STAYING HERE.

IF YOU NEED A PLACE TO SLEEP, YOU CAN SLEEP IN ONE OF THE BEDS THAT I USE FOR PATIENTS.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. FOOD TASTES BETTER WHEN YOU SHARE IT WITH FRIENDS.

...HE BURNED HIS OWN HOUSE TO THE GROUND.

ON THE DAY ED GOT HIS GOVERNMENT LICENSE AND WAS ABOUT TO SET OUT ON HIS JOURNEY...

'FRAID NOT.

THOSE BOYS DON'T HAVE A HOUSE TO GO HOME TO.

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT ALCHEMY, BUT I CAN SENSE THAT WHAT THOSE BOYS ARE TRYING TO DO IS NO ORDINARY TASK.

THEY DESTROYED THEIR OWN HOME SO THAT FROM THAT MOMENT ON, THEY COULD NEVER TURN BACK.

LET'S GO.

EVERY-ONE'S WAITING FOR US.

ONE...

TWO...

READY? HERE WE GO.

BII

KRK!

THREE !!

ONE!!

OHHH...

EVERY TIME...I HATE THAT MOMENT WHEN THE NERVES GET CONNECTED.

DON'T BE SUCH A BABY.

OKAY, TRY MOVING IT.

BE A SHAME. YOU'RE OUR CASH COW.

RIGHT ARM IS GOOD

SOON, I CAN KISS THIS PAIN GOODBYE ONCE AND FOR ALL.

THAT'S RIGHT! WHY BE IN SUCH A HURRY TO GET BACK TO NORMAL?

AUTO-MAIL IS ***COOL!***

EVERYTHING'S GONNA BE GREAT ONCE I FIND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE AND GET MY OLD BODY BACK.

SHUT UP, ***ALCHEMY OTAKU.***

ENGI-NEERING OTAKU.

OH MY... HOW ***WONDER-FUL*** AUTO-MAIL PROS-THETICS ARE!!

...AND THE BEAUTIFUL FORM BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF BIOPHYSICAL RESEARCH!

THE SMELL OF OIL, THE CREAKING OF ARTIFICIAL MUSCLES, THE WHIRRING OF BEARINGS...

HOW IS IT?

KRK KRK

FEELS GOOD.

TWIST

GA SHUNK

ALL DONE !

BUT IT'S LESS DURABLE THIS WAY, SO DON'T BE TOO ROUGH ON...

...SO THIS TIME I USED STEEL WITH A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF *CHROME* TO MAKE IT RUST-RESISTANT.

I KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE TYPE TO DO ANY KIND OF DAILY MAINTE-NANCE...

SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING, AL!

DASH

...HEY! ARE YOU LISTENING ?!!

YEAH, BUT ITS KIND OF TRICKY.

CAN YOU FIX IT RIGHT AWAY?

HMH, YES.

SEE THE RUNE ON THE INSIDE?

YUP.

THE MPS IN EAST CITY GATHERED THEM UP FOR ME.

CLANK CLANK

ARE THESE ALL THE PIECES OF YOUR ARMOR?

IT *IS* WRITTEN WITH BLOOD.

MY BLOOD.

IT ALMOST LOOKS LIKE IT'S WRITTEN WITH BLOOD.

I HAVE TO FIX HIS ARMS AND LEGS WITHOUT DESTROYING THIS RUNE.

THAT'S WHAT BINDS AL'S SOUL TO THE ARMOR.

YUP! A LITTLE DEEPER AND IT WOULD'VE BEEN ALL OVER FOR ME!

AH HA HA HA HA HA HA

THAT SURE WAS A CLOSE ONE, WASN'T IT?

PECCD

CL

AP!

BA

SHOOM

BASHOOM

BA

SHOOM

TWIST TWIST

ALL RIGHT THEN... SHALL WE?

FWIP

KA- KLANK

GOOD AS NEW.

WHOOSH

KRAK!

BAM

WHA

LEAP

Oh...

Hup...

SKRRK.K

BAP

CLANK

WHAT'S THIS THEN? A BROTHERS' QUARREL?

NO, NO.

GAH!

GMP

HMH?

FWIP

AAAGH!

I'M SPARRING TO MAKE SURE MY ARM AND LEG MOVE CORRECTLY.

AND I HAVEN'T USED MY BODY IN SO LONG, I NEED TO GET MY INSTINCTS BACK.

AAAAGH!!
DON'T COME NEAR ME!!

NO NEED TO HOLD BACK !

WHAT ARE THEY *DOING*... ?

HO HO...

IN THAT CASE, LET ME HELP YOU !!

RRIPP

STAGGER

WHAT'S FOR DINNER, GRANNY? WE'RE STARVING !!

THAT'S WHY WE HAVE TO PRACTICE LIKE THIS EVERY DAY

RUB RUB

OUR TEACHER ALWAYS TOLD US, "IN ORDER TO TRAIN THE SPIRIT, FIRST TRAIN THE BODY."

NO WONDER YOUR AUTO-MAIL BREAKS DOWN SO FAST!

SO YOU GUYS SPAR WHENEVER YOU HAVE SOME SPARE TIME?

A HEALTHY SPIRIT MAKES ITS ABODE IN A WELL-TRAINED BODY. THERE ARE FEW THINGS MORE BEAUTIFUL.

HMH... BUT THE PRINCIPLE IS CORRECT.

KEH KEH KEH

THAT'S FINE BY ME. THOSE BOYS ARE MAKING ME RICH!

HERE YOU GO

AL, PASS ME THE SAUCE.

LOOK AT MINE!

EWWW

RIP

WELL THEN, I GUESS IT'S GONNA BE QUIET AROUND HERE AGAIN.
TOMORROW MORNING I'M CATCHING THE FIRST TRAIN TO CENTRAL.
HEH HEH. YEAH, JUST THINK, AL...ONCE WE GET OUR OLD BODIES BACK, WE'RE NOT GONNA NEED THESE TWO ANYMORE!
UNTIL THEN, YOU CAN'T DO A THING WITHOUT US ENGINEERS, YOU LITTLE RUNT.
DON'T GET COCKY YET, YOU BRAT!
HMH... WELL PUT!
WHO'RE YOU CALLING A RUNT ?!!

SNORRR—

IT'S ALMOST AS IF YOU'RE HIS PARENT, AL.

KEH KEH KEH

AW, ED.. YOU'LL CATCH COLD IF YOU KEEP SLEEPING WITH YOUR STOMACH OUT.

I CAN HARDLY TELL WHICH ONE OF YOU IS THE OLDER BROTHER.

IT'S NOT EASY HAVING SUCH A HIGH-MAINTE-NANCE OLDER BROTHER.

IT'S TRUE.

I'M 14 AND ED'S 15.

HOW OLD ARE YOU GUYS, NOW?

HE SEEMS SO ***DEFENSE-LESS*** WHEN HE'S SLEEPING.

ZZZ

AH HA HA!

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT HE'S A "HUMAN WEAPON." AFTER ALL, WE'RE THE SAME AGE AND HE'S SO TINY!

HEH HEH

SEEING HIM LYING THERE, I'M REMINDED OF THE TIME WE WENT TO THE YOUSWELL MINING TOWN.

HA HA HA!

OH...

?

HE WAS PRETTY RECKLESS, TOO.

...BUT WHEN HE HEARD THE MINER BOSS SAY, "THE MINES ARE OUR HOMES AND OUR GRAVES," HE ENDED UP HELPING THEM OUT AFTER ALL.

AT FIRST MY BROTHER HAD NO INTENTION OF HELPING THEM...

THE MINERS WERE BEING TAXED OUT OF THEIR LIVELIHOOD BY THE LIEUTENANT WHO OWNED THE MINES AND WANTED OUR HELP.

I UNDERSTAND... YOU GUYS KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO HAVE A HOME AND THEN LOSE IT.

KEH KEH KEH! "THIS IS OUR HOME," HUH?

MY BROTHER DOES TOO, EVEN THOUGH HE DOESN'T SAY IT.

THAT'S WHY I APPRECIATE HOW YOU AND WINRY ALWAYS WELCOME US BACK LIKE WE'RE YOUR REAL FAMILY.

YUP.

WE DON'T REGRET BURNING OUR HOUSE DOWN, BUT SOME TIMES... WE FEEL THIS OVERWHELMING SADNESS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE REALITY IS THAT WE NO LONGER HAVE THE HOUSE THAT WE WERE BORN AND RAISED IN.

HE REALLY TRIES SO HARD...

..TO BE ***TOUGH.*** THAT IDIOT...

MAYBE WE COULD GET OVER IT IF WE JUST HAD A GOOD ***CRY.***

HA HA...

BUT WITH THIS BODY I CAN'T CRY EVEN IF I WANTED TO.

AND THEN THERE'S ***THAT*** IDIOT WHO HAS A BODY THAT ***CAN*** CRY WITH BUT ***WON'T.***

TUG

CLUCK + DOODLE-DOODLE-DOO!

YOU BET.

THANKS FOR EVERY-THING, GRANNY.

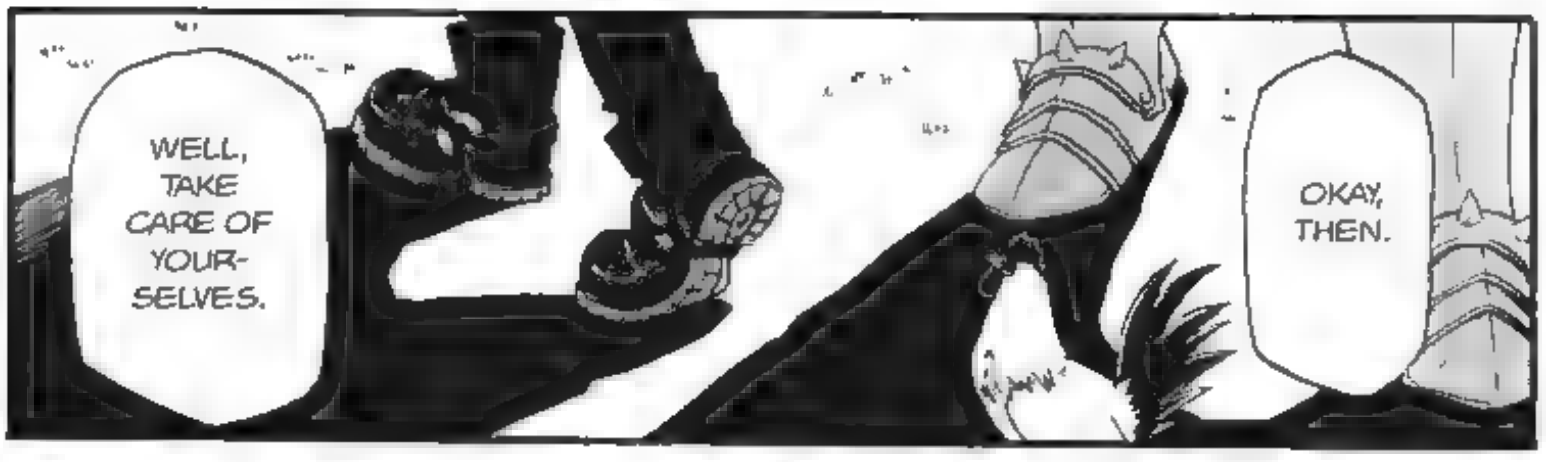
IF YOU WOKE HER UP SHE'D JUST GO ON AND ON ABOUT AUTO-MAIL MAINTE-NANCE.

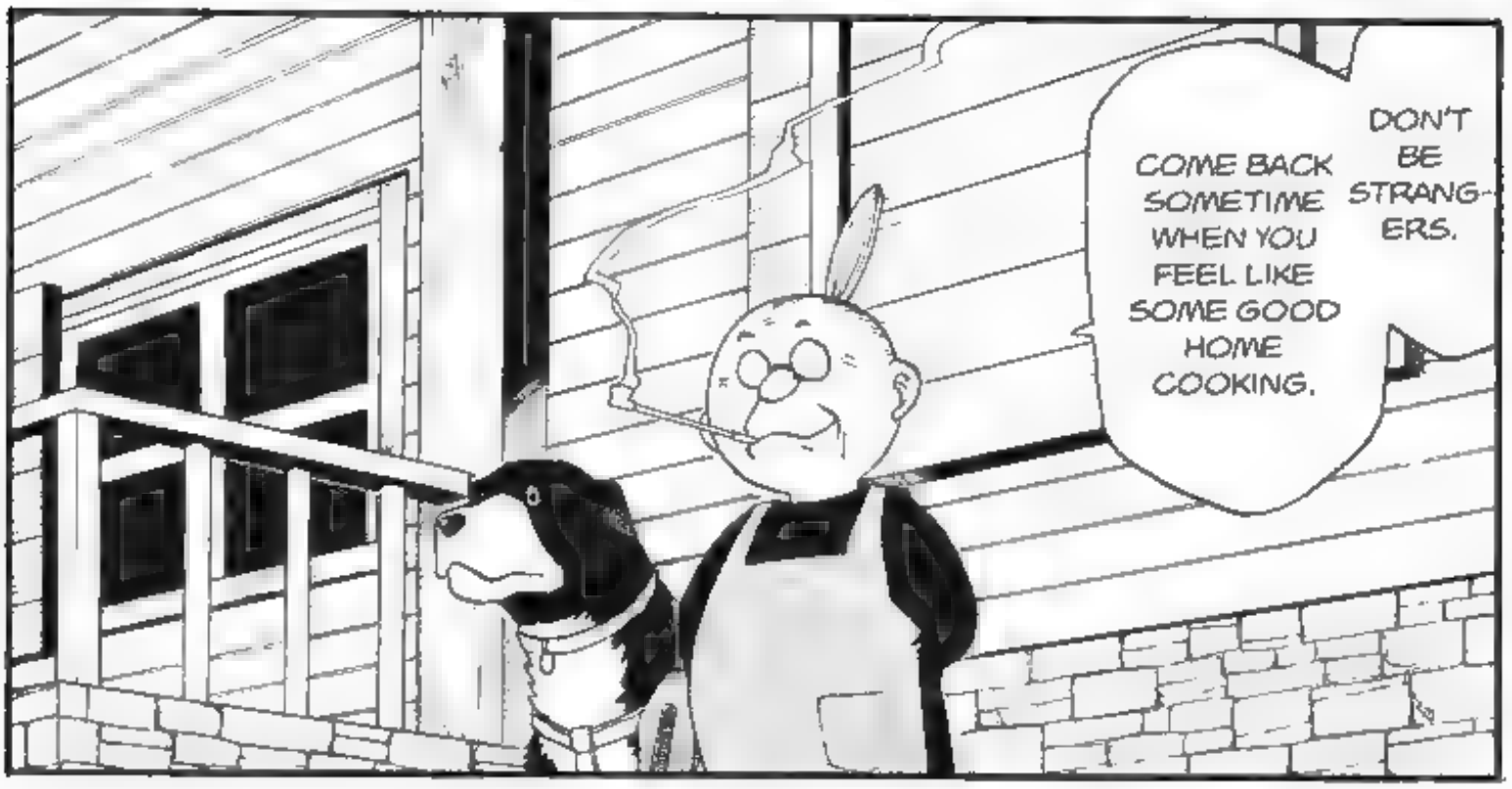
DON'T BOTHER.

SHOULD I WAKE HER UP?

SHE DID SO MANY ALL-NIGHTERS THAT SHE'S STILL ASLEEP.

HEY, WHERE'S WINRY?


WELL, TAKE CARE OF YOUR-SELVES.
OKAY, THEN.


COME BACK SOMETIME WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE SOME GOOD HOME COOKING.
DON'T BE STRANG-ERS.

HEH HEH..
WHAT'S SO FUNNY ?

LIKE WE'D COME ALL THE WAY TO THE BOONDOCKS JUST FOR A MEAL.
OKAY. WE'LL BE BACK.

HMPH.

WE JUST DRIFT FROM PLACE TO PLACE LIKE A COUPLE OF TUMBLE-WEEDS.

HAVING A PLACE TO COME HOME TO IS TRULY A WONDERFUL FEELING.

A FAMILY THAT WEL-COMES YOU BACK..

ED! AL!

WAVE WAVE

SEE YOU LATER.

LATER
!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "GOOD MORNING"? DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?

YAAAWN.... GOOD MORNING, GRANNY.

GO CLEAN UP YOUR WORK TABLE.

WHOA. I SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE DAY.

OH YEAH... I HAVEN'T TOUCHED IT SINCE I FIXED ED'S ARM.

I DON'T WANNA DO ANY MORE ALL-NIGHTERS...

SHEESH. EVERY TIME HE COMES HERE THINGS GETS SO CRAZY.

HM ?

ROLL

A 03

...UH-

OH.

Chapter 10:
The Philosopher's Stone

JUST HURRY UP AND COME ON!

HMH...IT'S NOT AS IF THE LIBRARY'S GOING TO RUN AWAY.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE IN SUCH A RUSH, BIG BROTHER...

HURRY UP, AL!

WE'RE FINALLY IN CENTRAL !!

ATTENTION

13.

12.

SNAP

MAJOR ARMSTRONG, WE'VE COME HERE TO ESCORT YOU.

OH!

AND THIS MUST BE THE FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST ?

THANK YOU, SECOND LIEUTENANT ROSS. AND YOU AS WELL, SERGEANT BROSH.

I CAN SEE WHERE YOU GOT YOUR NICKNAME! VERY DIGNIFIED!

DENNY BROSH, REPORTING, SIR.

MY NAME IS *MARIA ROSS*. IT'S AN HONOR TO MEET YOU, SIR!

THE *LITTLE* GUY OVER THERE?

HM ?

EH? SO THIS IS GOODBYE?! THANKS FOR YOUR HELP. DROP ME A POSTCARD SOMETIME. BYE BYE!

WELL, I HAD BEST HEAD OVER TO CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS TO FILE MY REPORT.

STEAM STEAM STEAM

I DIDN'T MEAN *LITTLE*, PER SE... THAT IS...

P... PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES !!

YES, SIR !

WELL THEN, I'LL LEAVE HIM WITH YOU!

GLOMP

GRGH!

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN !

CRACK CRICK SNAP

I WILL MISS YOU AS WELL, MY LAD! AHH, THE GOOD TIMES WE SHARED ON THE ROAD!

BUT OF COURSE!

WHAAAT? MORE BODYGUARDS?!

DON'T YOU MEAN, "THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP," BIG BROTHER?

WELL, I GUESS WE'RE STUCK WITH YOU.

YUP.

SO...THE PERSON IN THE ARMOR IS THE *YOUNGER* BROTHER...?

BIG BROTH-!?

ACCORDING TO THE REPORTS FROM EASTERN HQ, THE ASSASSIN KNOWN AS "SCAR" IS STILL AT LARGE. UNTIL THAT SITUATION IS RESOLVED, WE HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO BE YOUR GUARDS.

WE MAY NOT BE AS DEPENDABLE AS THE MAJOR, BUT WE ARE CONFIDENT IN OUR ABILITY TO GUARD YOU, SO PLEASE, FEEL AT EASE.

BUT WHY DO YOU WEAR *ARMOR*?

IT'S A HOBBY.

HEY! THERE IT IS! I SEE IT!

HOW SHOULD I KNOW? WHO ARE THESE KIDS!!?

A HOBBY!? SECOND LIEUTENANT, WHAT SORT OF HOBBY ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT!?

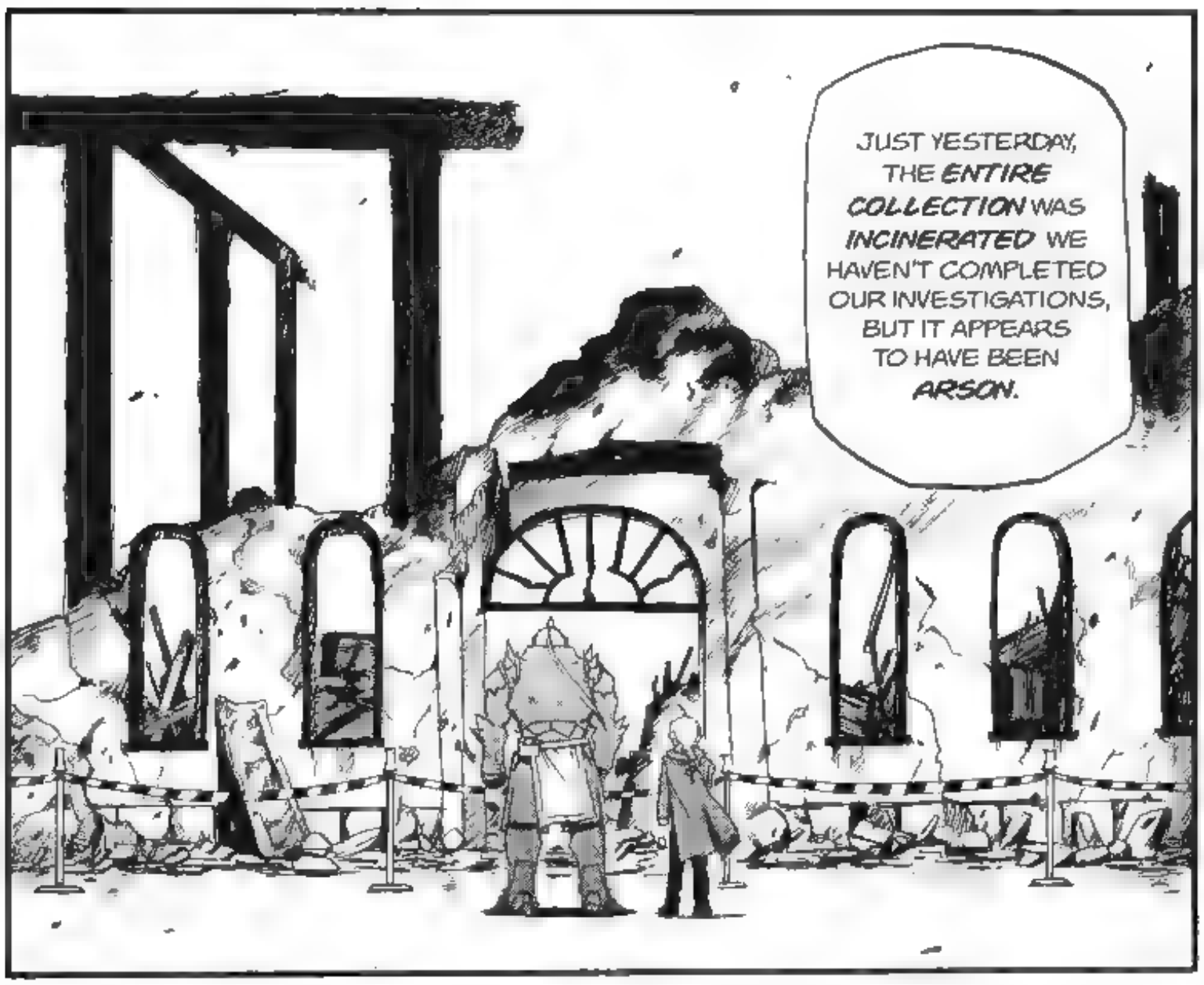
THEY SAY IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN A HUNDRED LIFETIMES TO READ THE ENTIRE COLLECTION OF BOOKS CONTAINED WITHIN.

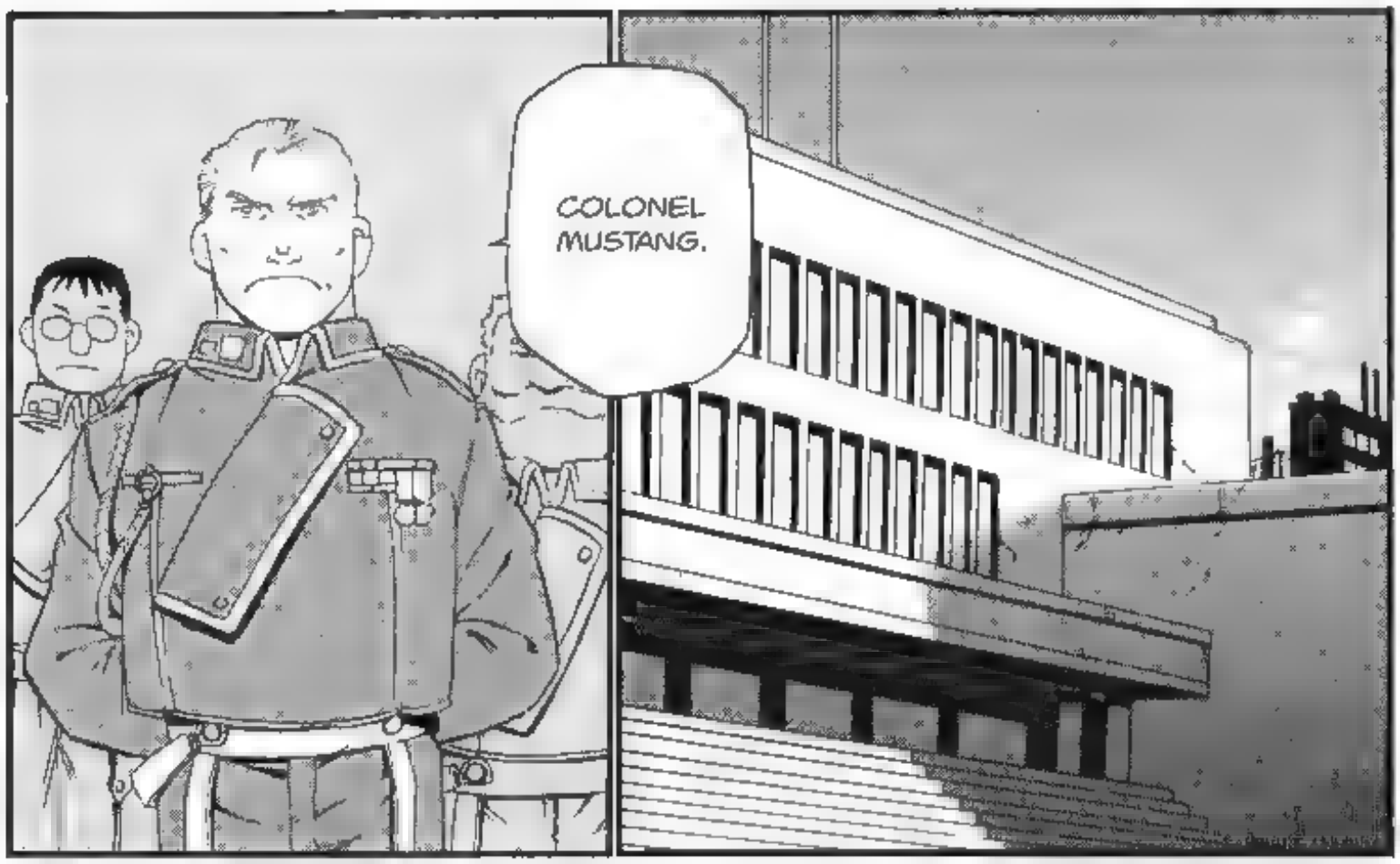
AH, YES. THAT'S THE NATIONAL CENTRAL LIBRARY. IT HOUSES MORE BOOKS THAN ANY OTHER LIBRARY IN THE NATION.

RESEARCH DATA, HISTORICAL RECORDS, AND LISTS OF NAMES WERE STORED THERE...

THE FIRST BRANCH, WHERE YOU TWO ARE HEADED, IS JUST TO THE WEST OF HERE.

...HOW-EVER...


JUST YESTERDAY, THE ENTIRE COLLECTION WAS INCINERATED WE HAVEN'T COMPLETED OUR INVESTIGATIONS, BUT IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ARSON.


COLONEL MUSTANG.

HAVE YOUR INJURIES HEALED ALREADY, MAJOR GENERAL?

THEY'RE NOTHING THAT WOULD INTERFERE WITH MY WORK.

NOW, IF YOU'LL COME WITH ME, COLONEL, I'D LIKE TO DISCUSS THE ***SCAR INCIDENT*** WITH YOU.

OH, HELLO, MAJOR GENERAL HAKURO.

I WANT ***RESULTS***, NOT ***EXCUSES.***

YOU HAD BETTER BRING HIM IN SOON, COLONEL. I WILL NOT HAVE YOU MAKE A ***LAUGHING STOCK*** OF THE ENTIRE EAST CITY MILITARY!

SIR, WE WILL CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY, SO IF YOU COULD GIVE US A LITTLE MORE TIME-

HOW IS IT THAT YOU'VE ALLOWED ***ONE MAN*** TO CAUSE THIS MUCH ***TROUBLE***? DESPITE THE FACT THAT YOU'VE DEPLOYED THIS MANY MEN, YOU STILL HAVE NOTHING TO REPORT?

DID THAT GUY COME OUT HERE FROM NEW OPTAIN JUST TO TALK SMACK?

NOW HE'S PARANOID THAT I'M GOING TO TAKE HIS POSITION ONE DAY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

HE'S JUST ***BITTER*** THAT A YOUNGSTER LIKE ME HAS REACHED THE RANK OF COLONEL.

PLUS, IF AN INCIDENT THAT HAS BEEN GIVING EVEN ***CENTRAL*** TROUBLE IS TAKEN CARE OF ***HERE***, THEN THAT WILL MAKE ***ME*** LOOK GOOD.

THE SPROUTS OF FUTURE UNREST MUST BE PULLED BEFORE THEY CAN TAKE ROOT.

BUT I DO WANT TO TAKE CARE OF THIS SCAR INCIDENT JUST AS QUICKLY AS HE DOES.

UNTIL THE DAY THAT I BECOME ***PRESIDENT*** AND GAIN ***COMPLETE MILITARY POWER.***

EAST CITY

"OUT OF CRISIS COMES OPPOR-TUNITY."

I WILL DO ***ANYTHING*** THAT WILL HELP IN MY PROMO-TION...

IT MAY BE WISE TO REFRAIN FROM RASH STATE-MENTS.

YES... I SHOULD TRY TO BE MORE CAREFUL.

KLAK

HOW ARE THINGS GOING, GLUTTONY?

THE FULLMETAL BOY FIGURED OUT THAT THE DATA FOR THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE WAS HIDDEN IN THE FIRST BRANCH, SO I WENT THERE BEFORE HIM AND ***DESTROYED*** IT.

NOPE. HE'S NOT CLOSE BY.

HOW WAS YOUR TRIP?

ANY SIGN OF SCAR?

WELCOME BACK, LUST.

NOW THAT HE'S IN CENTRAL, THERE'S NO NEED TO WATCH THE BOY, SO I CAME BACK TO SEE HOW THINGS ARE GOING OVER HERE.

...SO I JUST BURNED DOWN THE WHOLE BUILDING.

WITH SO MANY BOOKS IN THE COLLECTION, I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO GO THROUGH EVERY-THING...

Sniff Sniff

I SMELL HIM! I SMELL HIM!

Sniff

GLUT-TONY?

GUCCA

I TAKE IT YOU STILL HAVEN'T...

I SMELL AN ISHBALAN... CLOAKED IN THE SMELL OF BLOOD.

CAN I EAT HIM?

UH HUH.

VERY GOOD, GLUTTONY.

DON'T LEAVE A SINGLE HAIR.

CLAK

SQUEAK!

CHI CHI

ONG ONG

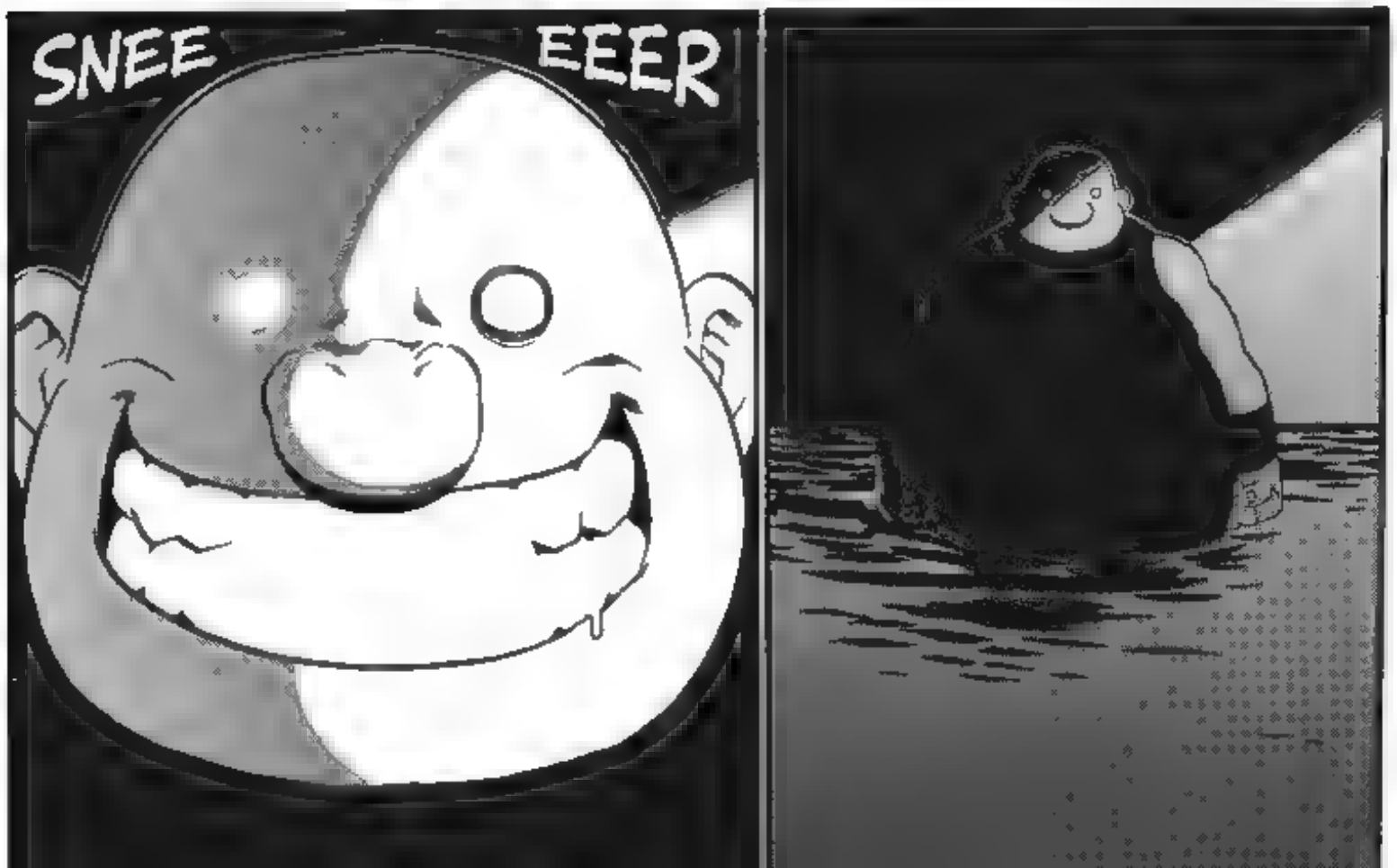
ONG ONG ONG

KLAK

KLAK

PLIP

SQUEE
!


SNEE
EEER

BAM

BABAM

LET'S SEE...

TIM MARCOH...

IF IT'S NOT HERE, IT EITHER MEANS THAT IT DOESN'T EXIST OR IT WAS DESTROYED IN THE FIRE THE OTHER DAY.

ANY NEW ACQUISITIONS, WHETHER KEPT IN THE MAIN BUILDING OR THE OTHER BRANCHES, SHOULD BE ON FILE.

INFORM

I DON'T SEE ANY RESEARCH JOURNALS BY A TIM MARCOH IN OUR RECORDS. CERTAINLY NOTH NG ABOUT THE "PH LOSOPHER'S STONE."

HEY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT ?

DO WE LOOK ALL RIGHT?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP ..

DOO

OOM

UH... HELLO ?

SHE'S A REAL *BOOK-WORM*.

YOU COULD SAY THAT...

OH YEAH !

YOU KNOW, THE GIRL WHO USED TO WORK AT THE FIRST BRANCH...

HEY! SHESKA MIGHT KNOW SOME-THING.

WHO'S THAT? SOMEONE WHO KNEW A LOT ABOUT THE BOOKS AT THAT BRANCH?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET HER?

I COULD LOOK UP SHESKA'S ADDRESS FOR YOU.

HELLO...?

KREEK

THE LIGHT'S ON, SO SHE SHOULD BE HERE.

NOK

MAY-BE SHE'S NOT HOME?

NOK NOK

NOK NOK

NO AN-SWER.

GWOOOOOO

WHOA! WHAT'S WITH ALL THE BOOKS?!

SOMEONE ACTUALLY *LIVES* HERE?!

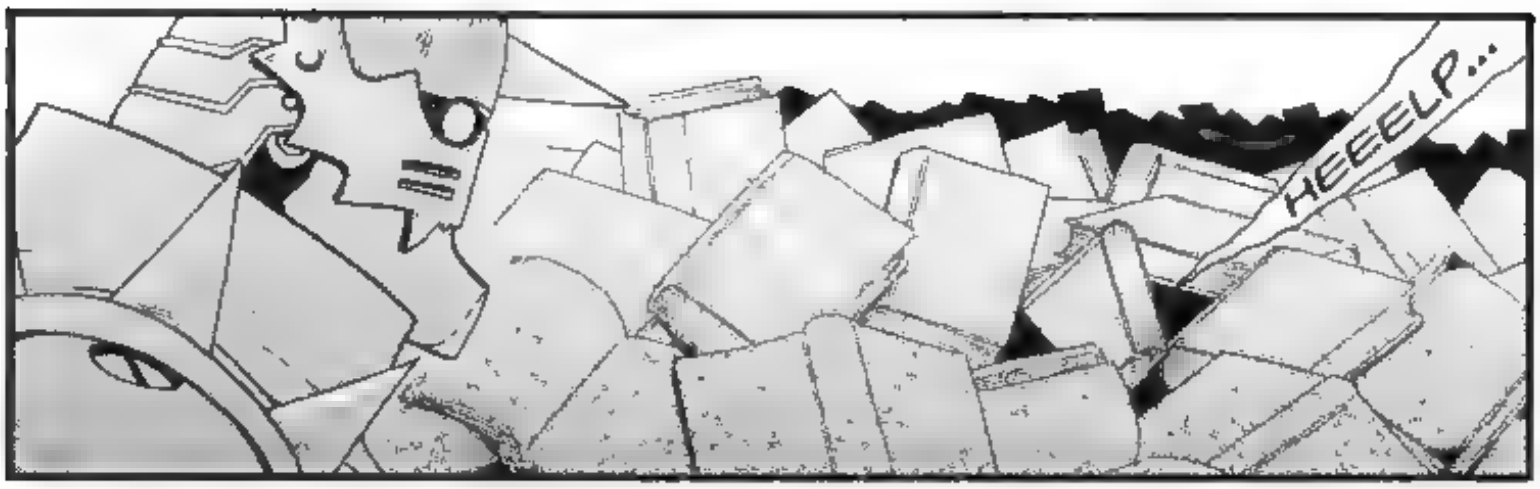
SOMEBODY...

HOW COULD ANYONE LIVE WITH THIS MUCH CLUTTER?

HELLO?!

MS. SHESKA!

ARE YOU HERE?


HEEELP...

I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE UNDER THERE.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH !!
AAAAH! I'M SORRY, I'M SO SORRY!! I ACCIDENTALLY TIPPED OVER THE MOUNTAIN OF BOOKS...
WAAA
BIG BROTHER! DO YOU HEAR THAT?!
SOME-ONE'S BURIED UNDER THERE !!
DIG!! DIG!!
AAAH!

AS YOU CAN TELL, I REALLY LOVE BOOKS, SO WHEN I GOT A JOB AT THE LIBRARY BRANCH I WAS ECSTATIC!
BUT... BECAUSE I LOVE TO READ SO MUCH, I, UH...
YES, I'M SHESKA.
YOU'RE WELCOME

I WOULD FORGET THAT I WAS WORKING AND LOSE MYSELF IN THE BOOKS. THAT'S WHY I WAS FIRED.

AH!!

SHESKA, YOU'RE READING ON THE JOB AGAIN!!

I NEED TO WORK HARD SO I CAN PUT MY SICK MOTHER IN A BETTER HOSPITAL, BUT...

I'M NO GOOD AT ANYTHING BUT READING, SO NO MATTER WHERE I GO, I CAN NEVER KEEP A JOB.

SOB SOB SOB SOB SOB SOB

IT'S TRUE. I'M THE MOST ***USELESS*** PERSON IN THE WORLD! THE ***SCUM OF SOCIETY!***

IS SHE REALLY ALL RIGHT...?

DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SOME RESEARCH DOCUMENTS BY TIM MARCOH?

UH... I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU ONE QUESTION.

YES! I REMEM-BER.

HIS NOTES WERE THE ONLY HANDWRITTEN DOCUMENTS AMONG ALL THE PRINTED BOOKS. SOMEONE HAD FILED THEM INCORRECTLY, SO I REMEMBER THEM QUITE WELL!

TIM MARCOH

SO IT REALLY WAS IN THAT BRANCH...

SO YOU WANTED TO READ THE RESEARCH NOTES?

UH... UM...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

WE'RE BACK TO SQUARE ONE.

STAGGER

STAGGER

FWUMP

AND THAT MEANS IT'S BURNED TO ASH...

NO, YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND...

HUH ?

I REMEMBER WHAT WAS IN THEM. THE WHOLE THING.

YES, BUT NOW WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT WAS WRITTEN. THAT WAS THE ONLY COPY.

DING!

EVERY WORD, EVERY PHRASE, WITHOUT ERROR!

I HAVE A ***PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY.*** ALL I HAVE TO DO IS READ SOMETHING ***ONCE***, AND I CAN RECALL ***EVERYTHING.***

CLOMP

I'M A WORM?

THANK YOU, BOOK-WORM !!

IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME, BUT WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO TRANSCRIBE IT FOR YOU?

TA-DA!!

HERE YOU GO! TIM MARCOH'S RESEARCH NOTES, TO THE LETTER !

SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG, BUT THERE WAS SO MUCH MATERIAL THAT IT TOOK ME FIVE DAYS TO WRITE IT DOWN.

THUNK

THERE TRULY ARE SOME AMAZING PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, HUH, AL...?

SHE DID IT ..SHE REALLY DID IT ..

YES! WITHOUT A DOUBT.

AND YOU'RE SURE ALL OF THESE ARE MARCOH'S ?

NOW IT MAKES SENSE. MARCOH COULDN'T RUN AWAY WITH HIS NOTES BECAUSE OF THE SHEER VOLUME OF MATERIAL.

HUH ?

"1,000 MEALS FOR DAILY LIVING" !!

TIM MARCOH'S RECIPE BOOK–

BUT...! I JUST COPIED IT DOWN EXACTLY HOW I REMEMBERED IT!

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PULL, LADY? THESE CAN'T BE THE RIGHT DOCUMENTS!

IT REALLY IS JUST A BUNCH OF RECIPES!

"A TABLE-SPOON OF SUGAR WITH A FEW DROPS OF WATER..."

I'M SORRY, YOU TWO. IT LOOKS LIKE THIS WAS ALL A WASTE OF TIME.

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE ELSE WRITING UNDER THE SAME NAME.

GRIN

YOU'RE AMAZ-ING. THANKS A LOT.

NOW, SHESKA, YOU'RE SURE THAT THIS IS A **FLAWLESS** REPRODUCTION OF MR. MARCOH'S NOTES, DOWN TO THE LAST WORD AND PHRASE?

YES! THERE ARE NO MISTAKES.

GOOD IDEA. WE CAN USE THEIR REFERENCE BOOKS.

C'MON, AL. LET'S TAKE THESE BACK TO THE MAIN LIBRARY!

ALL RIGHT!

SECOND LIEUTENANT ROSS! TAKE MY PIN NUMBER, SIGNATURE AND THE SILVER WATCH AS ID!

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE

OH, YEAH... ALMOST FORGOT! PAYMENT.

SHESKA, THANKS AGAIN FOR EVERY-THING. YOU'RE A LIFE-SAVER!

SEE YA!

YES, SIR..

GO TO THE STATE ALCHEMISTS' OFFICE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFECTURE, WITHDRAW THE AMOUNT I WROTE DOWN ON THERE FROM MY RESEARCH GRANT FOR THE YEAR AND GIVE IT TO SHESKA.

WHO IS THAT KID THAT HE CAN HAND OUT THIS AMOUNT OF CASH?!

EYAAAH!! DOES THAT SAY WHAT I THINK IT DOES?!

FROM HIS RESEARCH GRANTS, HUH...?

CLACK

FWIP

STATE ALCHEMISTS GO AGAINST THAT MOTTO, WHICH IS WHY WE'RE CALLED THE "DOGS OF THE MILITARY."

THAT'S OUR ORDER'S MOTTO. ALCHEMISTS HAVE ALWAYS STRIVED TO USE THEIR POWERS TO BENEFIT ORDINARY PEOPLE.

"ALCHEMISTS WORK FOR THE PEOPLE..."

WHICH IS WHY, TO KEEP THAT FROM HAPPENING...

YOU GOT IT.

I SEE... YOU WOULDN'T WANT YOUR KNOWLEDGE TO FALL INTO THE WRONG HANDS.

WUMP

AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO KEEP OUR TRADE SECRETS OUT THE PUBLIC ARENA.

THIS MAY LOOK LIKE A NORMAL RECIPE BOOK TO MOST PEOPLE...

...BUT IN REALITY, IT IS A ***HIGH-LEVEL ALCHEMICAL DOCUMENT*** WRITTEN IN A CODE KNOWN ONLY TO THE PERSON WHO WROTE IT!

...WE ALCHEMISTS KEEP OUR NOTES IN ***CODE.***

WITH ***KNOWLEDGE***, ***INSPIRATION***, ***PATIENCE*** AND GOOD OLD-FASHIONED ***HARD WORK***.

BUT IF ONLY ONE PERSON KNOWS THE CODE, HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO DECIPHER IT?

AFTER ALL, SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT ALCHEMY ORIGINATED IN THE KITCHEN.

THESE NOTES MIGHT BE EASIER TO DECIPHER BECAUSE THEY'RE DISGUISED AS A RECIPE BOOK.

JEEZ... I'M GETTING TIRED JUST ***THINKING*** ABOUT IT!

ALL RIGHT!!

LET'S CRACK THIS CODE AND FIND OUT THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE!

YEAH!!

REALLY? YOU CAN?

MY BIG BROTHER LOGS HIS RESEARCH NOTES IN THE GUISE OF A ***TRAVELOGUE***, SO WHEN I READ IT I CAN'T MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OUT OF IT.

*ON A SEPARATE NOTE, THE FLAME ALCHEMIST COLONEL MUSTANG'S RESEARCH LOG IS WRITTEN USING THE NAMES OF **WOMEN** AS CODE.*

TONIGHT I'LL HAVE DINNER AT THE HOTEL WITH MS. JOSEPHINE...

YOU'RE GOING ON ANOTHER DATE, SIR?

BIG BROTHER... MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST ASK MARCOH DIRECTLY...?

WHY'D HE MAKE IT SO DAMN *HARD*...?

ONE WEEK LATER..

GROOAN

I'M GO NG TO DECIPHER IT ON MY OWN, NO MATTER WHAT!!

NO, I SEE THIS AS MARCOH'S CHALLENGE. IT'S LIKE HE'S SAYING, "THOSE WHO CAN'T EVEN BREAK THIS SIMPLE CODE HAVE NO RIGHT TO KNOW THE TRUTH!"

UM...

BUT I STILL DON'T HAVE A CLUE...

I REALLY DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU...

THANKS TO YOU, MR. EDWARD, I WAS ABLE TO TRANSFER MY MOTHER TO AN EXCELLENT HOSPITAL!

NO SWEAT. IT WAS NOTHING.

I'D HEARD THAT YOU TWO WOULD BE IN HERE...

BOW

SHESKA...?

I GOT OFF ***CHEAP*** COMPARED TO WHAT THE SECRET CONTAINED IN THIS DATA IS WORTH.

YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT ***THAT.***

BUT I FEEL BAD ABOUT ACCEPTING SO MUCH MONEY...

HOW IS YOUR DECI-PHERING COMING ALONG?

SO...

I SEE...

SO THOSE AREN'T JUST RECIPES... ARE THEY?

GLOOM

GLOOOM

HAVE YOU FOUND A JOB YET?

NO PROBLEM. DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE MONEY.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERY-THING.

WELL, I'D BETTER GO.

THANK YOU.

IT'S JUST... IT MAKES ME SO HAPPY THAT A NOBODY LIKE ME, WHO'S NEVER BEEN GOOD AT ANYTHING, WAS ABLE TO HELP OUT.

IT'S NOT JUST THE MONEY...

THANKS!

SMILE

PLUS, WITH THAT AMAZING MEMORY OF YOURS, I'M SURE YOU'LL DO ALL RIGHT.

I THINK BEING SO PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING IS A TALENT IN ITSELF.

YOU'RE NOT A NO-BODY.

SHOOP

YO!
♪

KRAK KRAK

THERE'S BEEN SO MANY INCIDENTS LATELY, THE COURT-MARTIAL OFFICE THAT I'M IN CHARGE OF HAS REALLY BEEN BUSTLING.

AND WE STILL HAVEN'T CLOSED THE TUCKER CHIMERA CASE.

I HEARD FROM THE MAJOR THAT YOU'D BE HERE. I TOLD YOU GUYS TO GIVE ME A CALL IF YOU WERE EVER IN CENTRAL!

LIEUTE NANT COL ONEL HUGHES.

JUST WHO ARE THESE KIDS!?

THEY'RE SPEAK ING TO HIM AS EQUALS!

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! I'VE BEEN SO SWAMPED LATELY, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO LEAVE THE OFFICE.

YEAH, WE'VE BEEN KINDA BUSY EVER SINCE WE GOT HERE.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO BRING UP A SORE SUBJECT.

OH, SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I'VE GOTTA GET BACK TO WORK IN A MINUTE

NAH, I'M JUST ON BREAK. THOUGHT I SHOULD DROP BY AND SAY HI.

YOU WERE ABLE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO SEE US IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE?

SHEESH...IT'S BUSY ENOUGH AS IT IS WITHOUT THE FIRST BRANCH BURNING DOWN LIKE THAT. I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS.

HMMM...

THE FIRST BRANCH?

UH-HUH. IT WAS CLOSE TO THE COURT-MARTIAL OFFICE SO WE USED IT TO STORE OUR RECORDS. INCIDENT LOGS, LISTS OF NAMES, THAT KIND OF THING.

AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, THE FIRE'S REALLY SLOWED US DOWN.

HUH? THIS LITTLE GIRL HAS AN AMAZING TALENT LIKE *THAT*?! SHE COULD REALLY HELP US OUT!

WHAT'D YOU THINK, LIEUTENANT-COLONEL? WE'RE TRYING TO FIND HER A JOB.

WELL IT'S TRUE, I *DID* READ THE MILITARY CRIMINAL RECORDS... AND OF COURSE I REMEMBER THEM...BUT...

WHAAAT ?!

WA HA HA HA HA HA HA

BUT *UM*... REALLY ?!

HUH !?

WE'RE GONNA GIVE YOU A GREAT SALARY !!

LET'S GET THE PAPERWORK OUT OF THE WAY, RIGHT NOW!!

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERY-THING!!

I'M GOING TO BE MORE CONF-IDENT IN MYSELF AND TRY MY HARDEST !

THANK YOU SO MUCH !

UH... YOU GUYS !

HE LOOKS LIKE A KIDNAPPER.

WA HA HA HA!

THANK YOUUU!

DRAG DRAG

DRAG

IT REMINDS ME OF A *CERTAIN SOMEBODY* I KNOW.

PRETTY SMOOTH, LITTLE BROTHER.

"BEING SO PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING IS A TALENT IN ITSELF," HUH?

WELL, THAT "SOMEBODY" NEEDS TO GET BACK TO THESE NOTES IF HE'S EVER GOING TO FIGURE THEM OUT.

HEH HEH...

GONNG

GONNG

HM ?

GONNG

HE'S BEEN AT IT FOR TEN STRAIGHT DAYS...AND STILL NO PROG RESS.

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

ALL RIGHT, YOU TWO. LIBRARY'S CLOSING. TIME TO PACK UP.

GONNG

RED

205 ST

WHAM

TH... THIS CAN'T BE !!

THUNK THUNK

NO, THAT'S NOT IT.

H-HAVE YOU BEEN FIGHTING? PLEASE, JUST CALM DOWN...

IS...IS EVERY-THING ALL RIGHT ?!

WE *DID* DECIPHER IT.

THEN, ARE YOU FRUSTRATED BECAUSE YOU CAN'T DECIPHER THE CODE?

THERE'S NOTHING GOOD ABOUT IT! DAMMIT !!

REALLY?! THEN THAT'S GOOD .

WHAM

WE DID IT.

WE DECI-PHERED THE CODE.

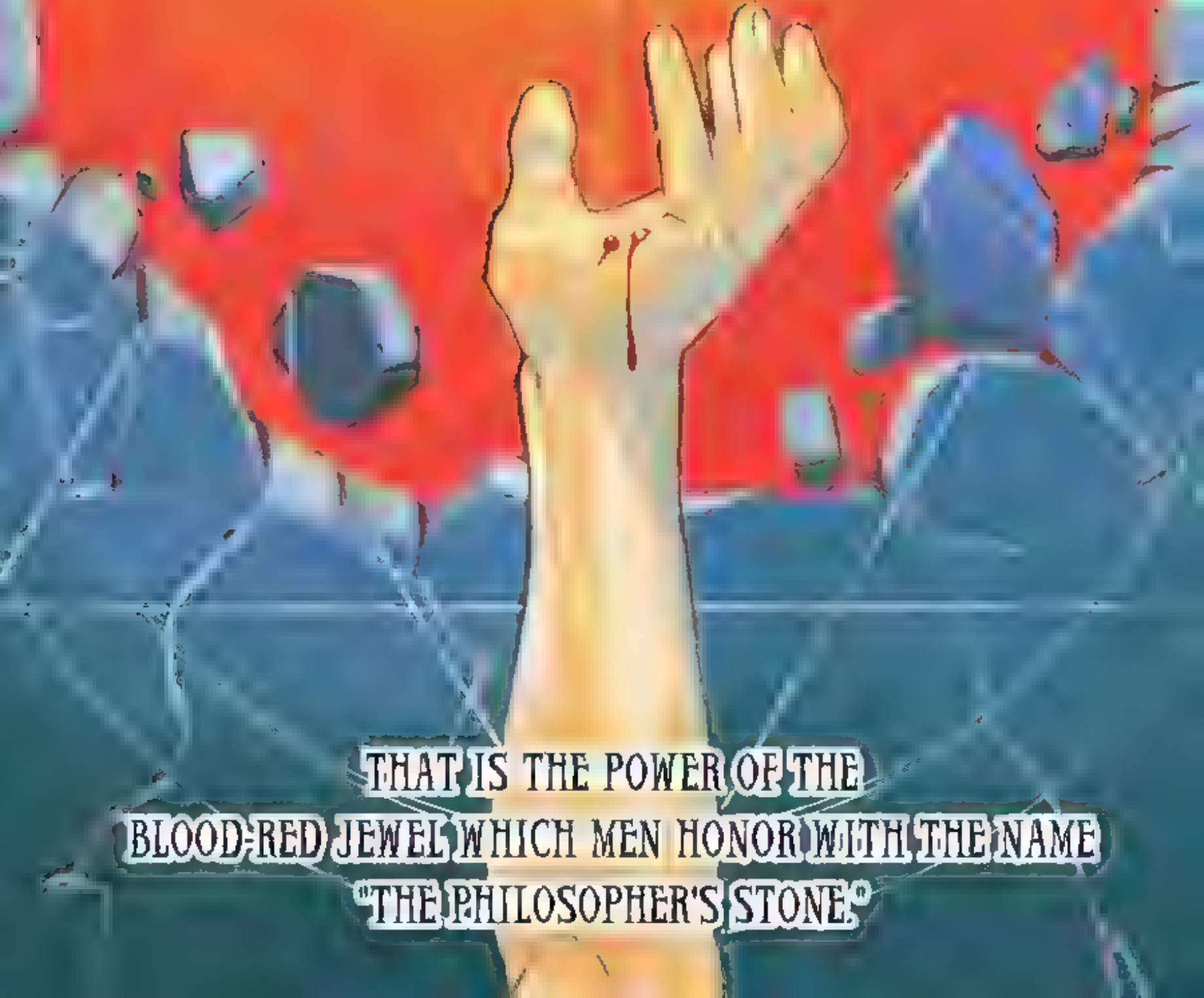
DAMMIT, MARCOH... WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU DOING?!
THIS REALLY IS "THE WORK OF THE DEVIL..."

THE MAIN INGREDIENT FOR THE PHILOS-OPHER'S STONE...

WHAT'S WRONG?

...IS A LIVING HUMAN BEING!!

IT BRINGS JOY IN SORROW,
VICTORY IN BATTLE,
LIGHT TO DARKNESS,
LIFE TO THE DEAD...



THAT IS THE POWER OF THE
BLOOD-RED JEWEL WHICH MEN HONOR WITH THE NAME
"THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE."

Chapter 11:
The Two Guardians

FULLMETAL
ALCHEMIST

IF WHAT THESE DOCUMENTS SAY IS TRUE, THEN THE MAIN INGREDIENT FOR THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE IS A ***LIVE HUMAN BEING.***

MAYBE WE WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER OFF NOT KNOWING THE TRUTH AT ALL.

NOT ONLY THAT, IT WOULD TAKE ***NUMEROUS*** HUMAN SACRIFICES TO CREATE ***ONE*** STONE!

SECOND LIEUTENANT ROSS, SERGEANT BROSH...

WE CAN'T ALLOW THIS TO GO UNPUN-ISHED!

I NEVER IMAGINED THAT SOMETHING SO INHUMANE WAS BEING CONDUCTED BY THE MILITARY...

BUT-

PLEASE.

COULD YOU PLEASE NOT TELL ANYONE ABOUT THIS?

PLEASE ACT AS IF YOU NEVER HEARD ABOUT THIS.

DEAR GOD...

DID A GAS MAIN BLOW UP?

IT MIGHT BE THE WORK OF *TERROR-ISTS.* HARD TO TELL

GREAT. ANOTHER PROBLEM CASE. WE HAVEN'T EVEN WRAPPED UP THE *SCAR INCIDENT* YET!

THE CITY'S BEEN TAKING A BEATING LATELY.

RECOG-
NIZE
IT?

LOOK,
OVER
THERE.

WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING, BUT IT COULD TAKE **WEEKS** TO SIFT THROUGH ALL THAT RUBBLE.

ANY SIGN OF HIS BODY ?

IT'S SCAR'S JACKET, ALL RIGHT. I'M SURE OF IT.

HM..

EVEN IF HE'S NOT DEAD, WITH THIS AMOUNT OF BLOOD LOSS HE MUST BE IN PRETTY BAD SHAPE.

YES, SIR?

SECOND LIEU-
TENANT
HAVOC!

STILL, WE CAN'T LET OUR GUARD DOWN UNTIL HE'S CONFIRMED DEAD OR BEHIND BARS.

SHEESH!

GIMME A BREAK, COLONEL! DO YOU WANT US TO DIE FROM FATIGUE?

NOBODY SLEEPS UNTIL YOU FIND HIS BODY! DO YOU UNDER-STAND?!

HAVE YOUR MEN ACCELERATE THEIR EXCAVATION. I WANT YOU WORKING ***DAY AND NIGHT!***

IS THAT SO?

THIS IS SERIOUS! UNTIL I SEE HIS CORPSE, I CAN'T EVEN RELAX ENOUGH TO GO ON ANOTHER DATE!

SHUT UP!

THERE, THERE. MAYBE NEXT TIME.

I DIDN'T GET TO EAT HIM.

BUT IN HIS CONDITION, HE WON'T BE GOING FAR ANYTIME SOON.

HE GOT AWAY.

I HAVE TO INFORM FATHER.

I'M RETURNING TO CENTRAL.

HRM..

YES, SIR. THEY HAVEN'T EVEN EATEN YET TODAY.

WHAT? THE ELRIC BROTHERS ARE COOPED UP IN THEIR ROOMS AGAIN?

YES...

THEY HAVE BEEN WORKING QUITE HARD LATELY.

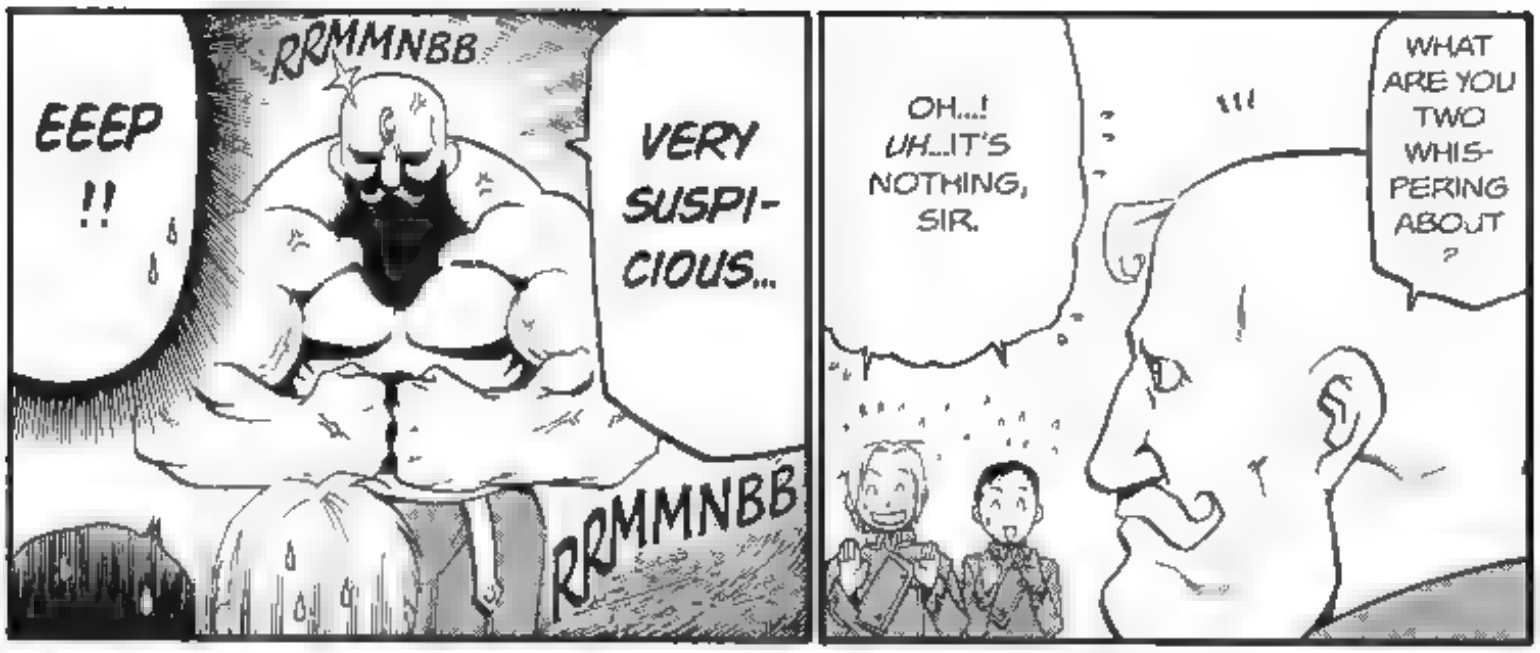
MAYBE THEY'RE JUST TIRED.

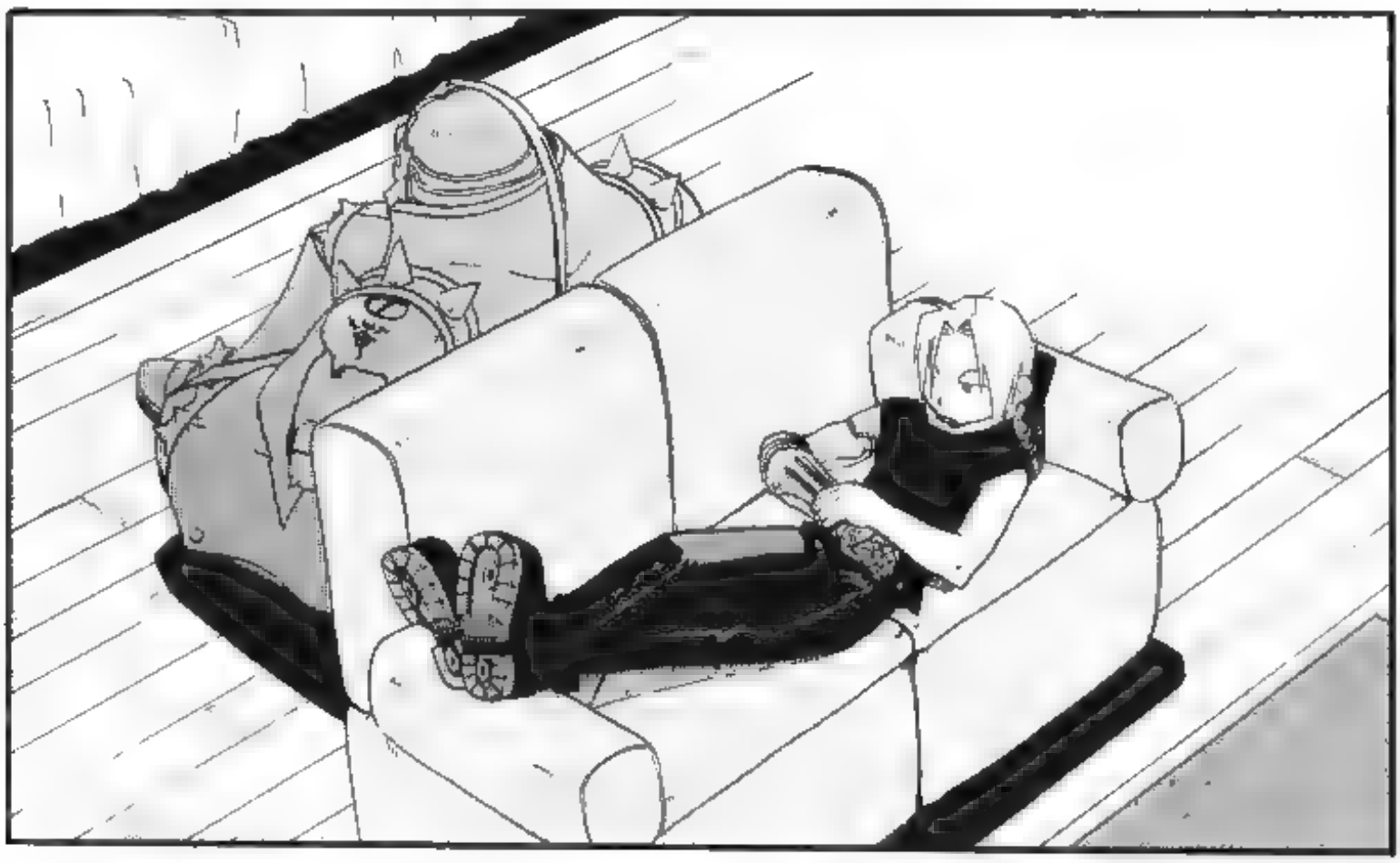
I FEEL SICK JUST THINKING ABOUT IT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO..

IT MUST HAVE REALLY GOTTEN TO THEM.

ALL THAT WORK DECIPHERING THE DATA, ONLY TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY DID...

I DON'T BLAME THEM.


EEEP !!
RRMMNBB
VERY SUSPI-CIOUS...
RRMMNBB
OH...! UH...IT'S NOTHING, SIR.
WHAT ARE YOU TWO WHIS-PERING ABOUT?



I'M NOT HUNGRY.
YOU SHOULD GO EAT SOME-THING.
HEY BIG BRO-THER..

...JUST WHEN I THINK OUR GOAL IS WITHIN REACH, IT SLIPS RIGHT THROUGH OUR FINGERS.

IT'S HAPPENED TIME AND AGAIN.

I'M TIRED OF THIS.

...YEAH.

IT'S LIKE...

I GUESS GOD REALLY DOES HAVE IT IN FOR US SINNERS.

HA HA..

AND NOW, WHEN WE ACTUALLY HAVE IT IN OUR GRASP, THE TRUTH SLAPS US IN THE FACE.

I WONDER IF WE'RE...

...GOING TO STAY LIKE THIS FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES?

HEY, AL.

THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT, BUT I'VE BEEN TOO AFRAID TO BRING IT UP...

WHAT IS IT?

!?

STOMP

THOSE TWO ARE STILL RESTING, SO-

STOMP STOMP STOMP

PLEASE WAIT !!

HOLD ON, SIR..

HRM!

SMASH

CLUNK

THE DOOR'S LOCKED SO WE CAN PRETEND WE'RE NOT-

IGNORE HIM. JUST IGNORE HIM!!

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

IT IS I!! OPEN THE DOOR!

BAM BAM

EDWARD AND ALPHONSE! ARE YOU IN THERE !?

BAM

NOOOO!

TA

DA!

I HEARD ALL ABOUT IT, EDWARD ELRIC !!

I CAN-NOT IN GOOD CON-SCIENCE STAY QUIET ABOUT THIS MATTER!!

NOT ONLY THAT, BUT IF THIS HELLISH RESEARCH WAS BEING CONDUCTED BY AN ORGANIZATION WORKING UNDER THE MILITARY, THEN IT IS A GRAVE SITUATION INDEED!!

GOOSH

WHO WOULD'VE IMAGINED THAT THE PHILOSO-PHER'S STONE CONCEALED SUCH A TERRIBLE SECRET!!?

SUCH A TRAGEDY !!

WH-WHEN HE GOT LIKE THAT, WE *HAD* TO TELL HIM...

I'M SO S-S-S-SORRY..

.....

TH...TH... THAT'S WHY WE NEED THE PHILOSO-PHER'S STONE, TO GET OUR ORIGINAL BODIES BACK.

YEAH...I, *UH*.. HAD A LITTLE *MISHAP* DURING THE CIVIL WAR BACK EAST.

YOUR RIGHT ARM IS ARTIFICIAL ?

..HUH ?

THE TRUTH CAN BE SO CRUEL.

IS THAT SO...? IT MUST HAVE BEEN SO DISAP-POINTING FOR YOU TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU DID.

YOU KNOW, WHAT HE TOLD US AT THE TRAIN STATION...
HUH ?
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT MARCOH TOLD US?
"THE TRUTH THAT LIES WITHIN THE TRUTH."
THE TRUTH... ?
?
WHAT'S WRONG, BIG BROTHER ?
SOME-THING...
SO... THERE MUST BE SOME-THING MORE...

THIS IS MOST LIKELY WHERE THE RESEARCH TOOK PLACE.

THE ONE DR. MARCOH WAS AFFILIATED WITH WAS *LABORATORY #3.*

RUSTLE

PRESENTLY, THE MILITARY OVERSEES *FOUR* ALCHEMICAL RESEARCH LABS WITHIN CENTRAL CITY.

HM...

I VISITED THE LAB RIGHT AFTER I GOT MY GOVERNMENT LICENSE, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER THERE BEING ANY KIND OF SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH GOING ON THERE.

WAIT, OVER HERE.. WHAT'S *THIS* BUILDING ?

CURRENTLY THE BUILDING'S OFF LIMITS, DUE TO THE DANGER OF COLLAPSE.

IN THE PAST, THAT WAS A FIFTH RESEARCH LAB, BUT THEY SHUT IT DOWN YEARS AGO.

THERE'S A ***PRISON*** NEXT TO IT.

HUH? WHAT MAKES YOU SO CERTAIN?

THAT'S OUR PLACE.

IF THE MAIN INGREDIENT FOR CREATING A PHILOSOPHER'S STONE IS LIVE HUMAN BEINGS, THEN THEY NEED A RELIABLE SUPPLY OF RAW MATERIALS.

UH...

...WHERE THEY'RE USED IN EXPERI-MENTS FOR THE PHILOSO-PHER'S STONE PROJECT.

SO THEY MAKE IT APPEAR AS IF THE PRISONERS ARE BEING EXECUTED, BUT IN REALITY, THEY'RE SECRETLY BEING TRANSPORTED TO THE LABS...

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THE BODIES OF EXECUTED PRISONERS AREN'T RETURNED TO THEIR FAMILIES, RIGHT?

DON'T GIVE ME THAT LOOK. JUST EXPLAINING ALL THIS MAKES ME SICK, TOO.

THE PRISONERS... ARE THE *INGREDIENTS*?

DOESN'T IT SEEM JUST A LITTLE TOO ***CONVENIENT*** THAT THE OLD LAB IS BUILT RIGHT NEXT TO THE PRISON?

Central prison

SO IF THE PRISON'S INVOLVED, DOES THAT MEAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS IN ON IT, TOO?

UNTIL WE KNOW MORE, IT'S HARD TO SAY IF IT GOES UP TO THE TOP, OR JUST TO THE WARDEN.

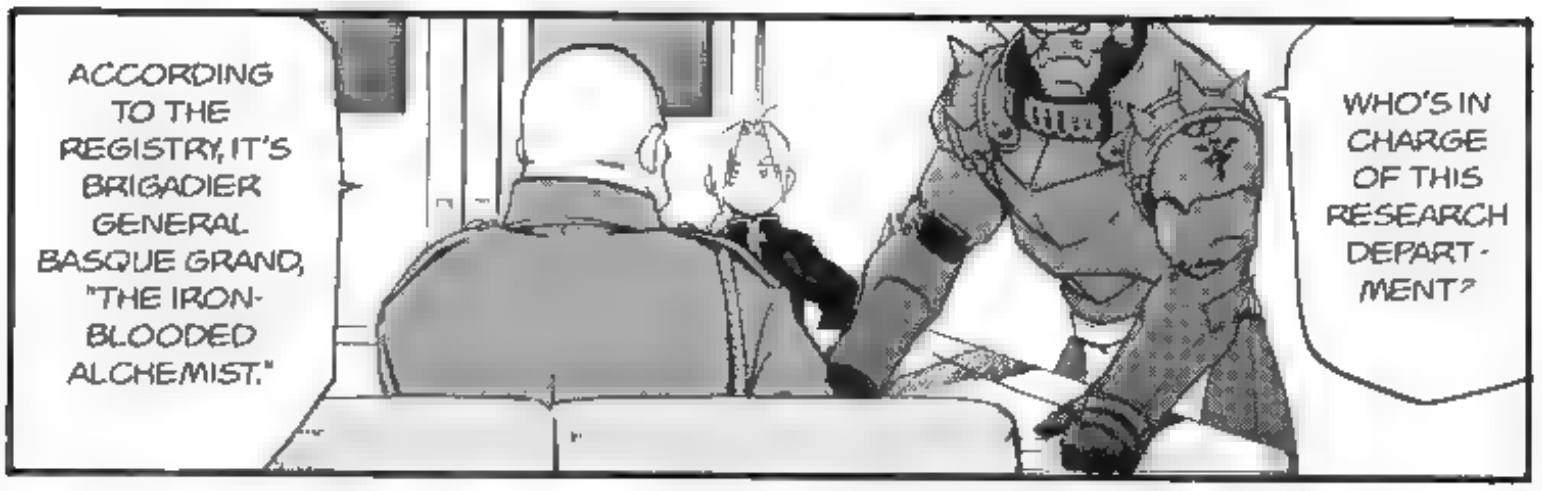
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT NOT BE INVOLVED AND THAT THIS RESEARCH DEPARTMENT 5 ACTING INDEPENDENTLY.

HRM... REMEMBER, RIGHT NOW THIS IS ALL SPECULATION.

YEAH.

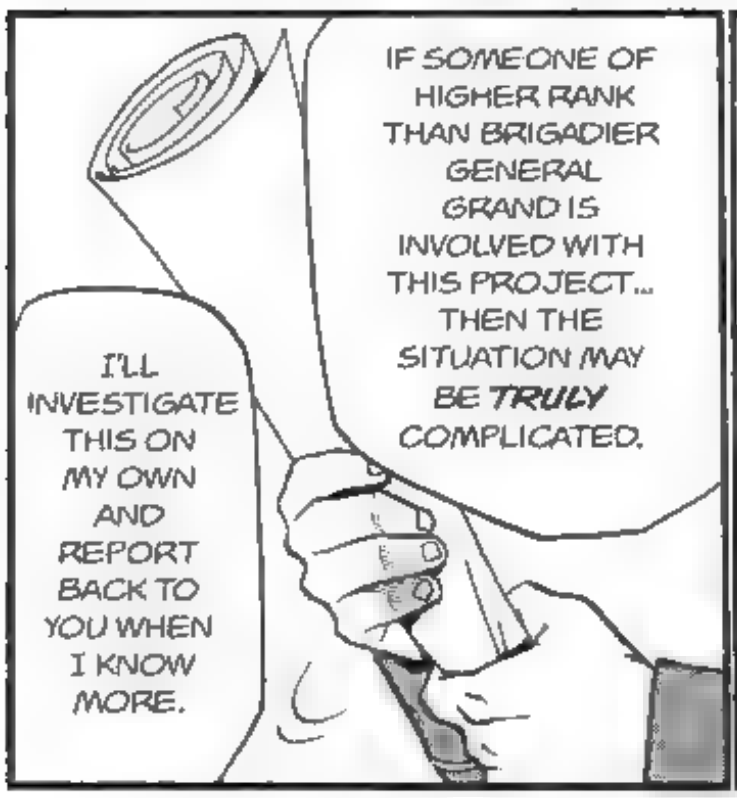
...I FEEL LIKE WE'VE GOTTEN OURSELVES IN WAY OVER OUR HEADS.

THAT'S WHY WE TOLD YOU TO FORGET EVERYTHING YOU'D HEARD.


ACCORDING TO THE REGISTRY, IT'S BRIGADIER GENERAL BASQUE GRAND, "THE IRON-BLOODED ALCHEMIST."
WHO'S IN CHARGE OF THIS RESEARCH DEPART-MENT?

HE WAS MURDERED BY SCAR JUST A FEW DAYS AGO.

THAT'S NOT POS-SIBLE.
WHY DON'T WE START BY CONTACTING THIS GENERAL GRAND?


IF SOMEONE OF HIGHER RANK THAN BRIGADIER GENERAL GRAND IS INVOLVED WITH THIS PROJECT... THEN THE SITUATION MAY BE TRULY COMPLICATED.
I'LL INVESTIGATE THIS ON MY OWN AND REPORT BACK TO YOU WHEN I KNOW MORE.

AMONG THOSE KILLED, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOMEONE WHO KNEW THE TRUTH.
SCAR HAS KILLED NUMEROUS STATE ALCHEMISTS THAT WERE AFFILIATED WITH MILITARY COMMAND.

WHAT !?

AND THE ELRIC BROTHERS WILL *STAY PUT!!*

UNTIL THEN, THE SECOND LIEUTENANT AND THE SERGEANT WILL NOT MENTION THIS TO ANYONE!

B-A-DUMP!

HRRMPH!! YOU TWO WERE GOING TO SNEAK INTO THE BUILDING TO INVESTIGATE, WEREN'T YOU!?

WE'LL WAIT HERE FOR YOUR REPORT, MAJOR.

SHEESH... AS IF WE'D DO SOMETHING THAT DANGEROUS.

NOD NOD

OKAY, OKAY !

DON'T EVEN THINK OF IT!

THIS IS FAR TOO DANGEROUS FOR CHILDREN LIKE YOU TO GO IN ALONE, EVEN IF THERE MAY BE A CLUE THERE TO REGAINING YOUR ORIGINAL BODIES!!

RRM

RRM

RRRMMBB

IT'S OUR FAULT THAT WE GOT STUCK WITH THESE BODIES...

...AND IT'S UP TO US TO FIND A WAY TO CHANGE THEM BACK.

YEAH, RIGHT.

SNEAK SNEAK

WHY WOULD A GUARD BE PROTECTING AN ABANDONED BUILDING?

THAT'S ODD...

HOW ARE WE GONNA GET IN?

VERY SUSPI-CIOUS.

THE LIGHT FROM THE TRANSMUTATION MIGHT ALERT THE GUARD.

WE COULD MAKE ***OUR OWN*** EN-TRANCE...

WAAH!

HUP

AND TWO!

ONE

ALL RIGHT. THEN THAT LEAVES...

IT PAINS ME TO SAY THIS...

GRK

GRK

...BUT AT TIMES LIKE THIS, I'M *GLAD* WE DON'T HAVE REGULAR HANDS AND FEET.

TUG

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.

HA HA! HA!

SHEESH.. THE ENTRANCE IS BLOCKED OFF, TOO?

TMP

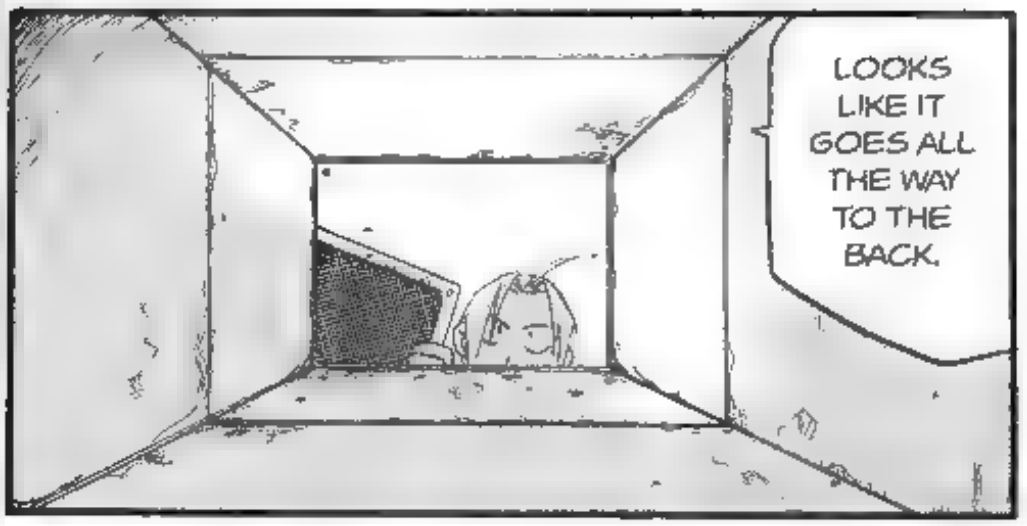
HM?

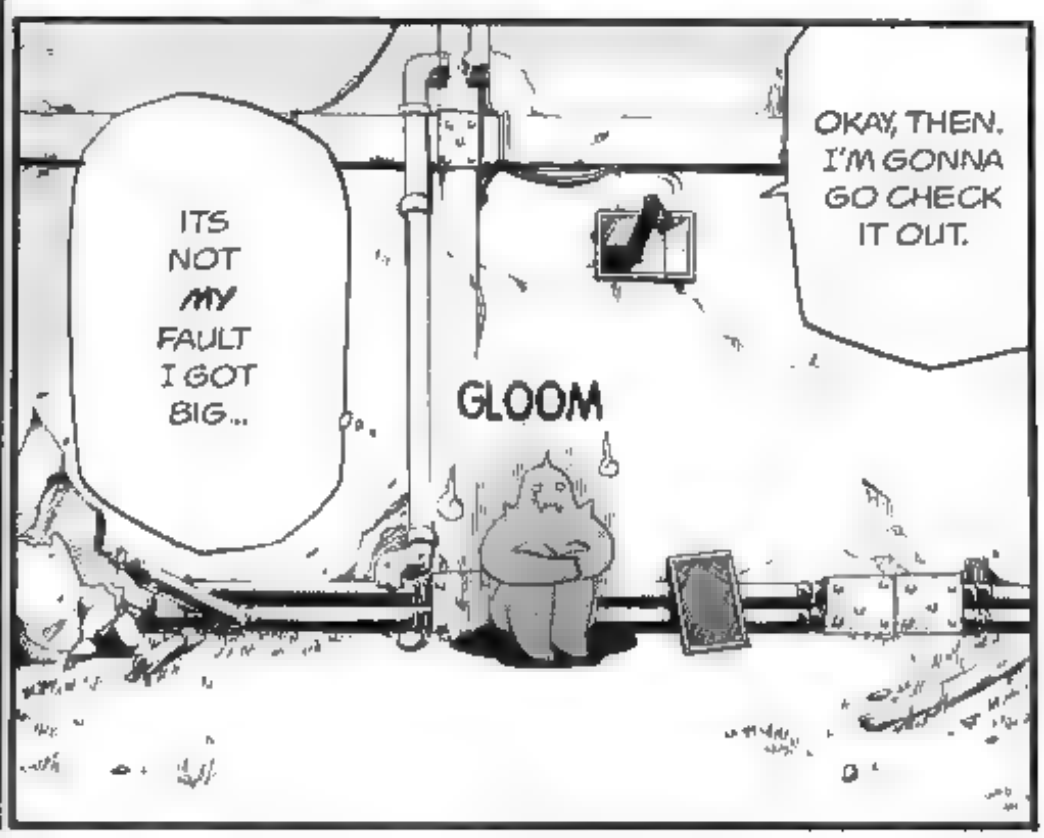
GONG

ONG

ONG

ONG





GONG

ONG

ONG

ONG

HM..

WHAT IS IT, 66?

48 ,

HEY, YOU AWAKE ?

DO YOU THINK WE'LL HAVE FUN THIS TIME?

WE HAVE *COMPANY*.

THERE'S JUST TWO OF 'EM. A LITTLE FELLA AND A BIG GUY. BIG GUY'S KINDA FUNNY LOOKIN'.

DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT.

..HEY.

I'LL LET YOU HAVE THE LITTLE ONE.

GEH HEH HEH !

"FUNNY LOOKIN'," HUH?

LIKE YOU'RE ONE TO TALK.

..INTO *MINCE-MEAT.*

I'LL TURN THE BIG ONE...

CRAWL CRAWL

IT'S EVEN TIGHTER THAN I EXPECTED.

OH MAN...

I SURE AM GLAD I'M SMA--

IF I WAS *NORMAL*-SIZED, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FIT AT ALL.

NOO-OO-OO!

FULL OF SELF-LOATHING BECAUSE HE ALMOST CALLED HIMSELF "SMALL."

SHOOP

HUP!

SLAM

HERE GOES..

THERE'S JUST ENOUGH LIGHTING TO ILLUMINATE THE FLOOR.

BINGO.

"ABANDONED," HUH?

I WONDER IF HE'S LOST?

EDWARD SURE IS TAKING A LONG TIME...

VOOM

TWEE♪

THOOM

OTHER-WISE, THIS WOULDN'T BE ANY FUN.

NOT BAD, NOT BAD! YER PRETTY FAST FOR SUCH A BIG GUY. I LIKE IT!

RIP

WHO'S THERE !!?

WHA--

NUMBER 66 !!

LEAST, THAT'S THE NAME THEY GAVE ME WHEN I GOT THIS JOB.

YOU ASKED ME WHO I AM, SO I GUESS I'LL TELL YA.

I'LL TELL YA AS I FINISH YOU OFF!!

GRA HA HA HA HA!

IF YOU HEARD MY **REAL NAME**, YOU'D PISS YOUR PANTS.

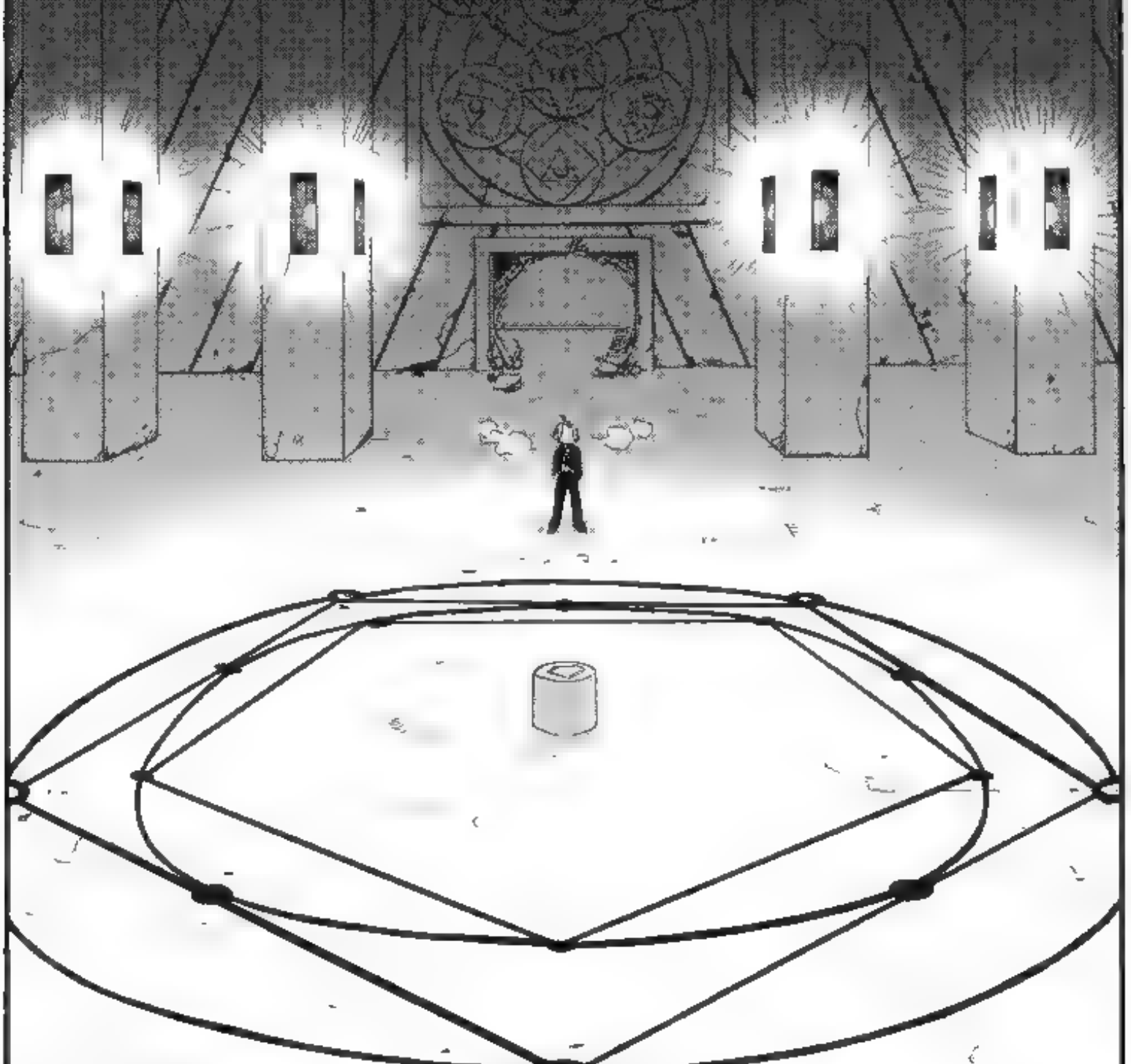
IF YOU WANNA SCREAM, DO IT NOW!

CLANG

I'LL HAVE YOU CHOPPED UP IN NO TIME.

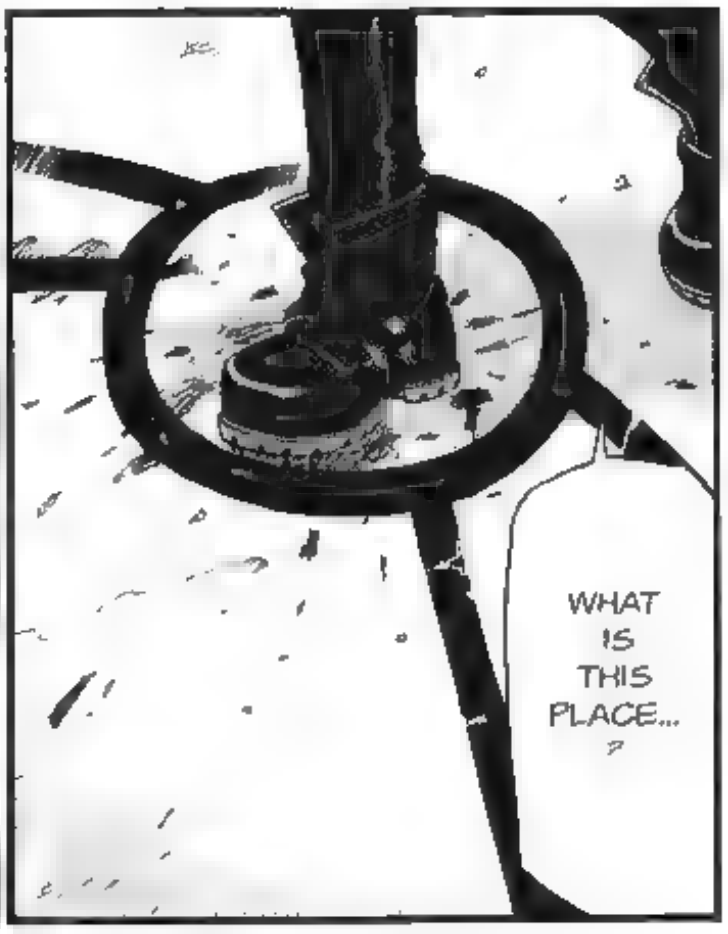
GEH HEH HEH.

ARE YOU SAYING THAT YOU'RE GOING TO **KILL** ME?



IT IS.

COULD THIS BE WHERE THEY TRANSMUTE THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE?


WHAT IS THIS PLACE...?

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT YOU SEEM TO KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE STONE...TOO MUCH.

CLANG

I HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED TO GUARD THIS PLACE.

FOR NOW, YOU MAY CALL ME ***NUMBER 48.***

I'M SORRY, TOO.

I'M SORRY THAT I HAVE TO DO THIS, KID.

SHING

MY ORDERS ARE TO ELIMINATE ANY INTRUDERS WHO TRESPASS HERE.

BA SHNG

SORRY THAT A "KID" LIKE ME IS GONNA KICK YOUR BUTT!

CL AP

ALCHEMY, HUH?

HM

SHOOOOOM

WELL, THEN...

SO FAST...

LET'S SEE YOUR SKILLS...

SWSH

RIP

...!!

T

HYAI

H

WHAK

TOO BAD FOR YOU...

IT JUST SAVED YOUR LIFE.

SO, YOUR STEEL LIMB EXTENDS UP TO YOUR SHOULDER

NOT TODAY, IT WON'T!! IF I BREAK THIS AGAIN, WINRY'S GONNA KILL ME!!

KLANG

SHNG

BOOM

..MY TRUSTED BLADE CAN EVEN CUT THROUGH STEEL!!

SQUEE

CLANG

BA

AM

KLONG ONG

!!

KLONGG

RRIP

OOF !

..HEY! I KNOW THAT SOUND.

ONG ONG ONG

...THAT YOU'RE *HOLLOW* INSIDE?

COULD IT BE...

HOW DID YOU KNOW?

...VERY GOOD.

IT MAKES ME SICK..

...KNOWING THAT THERE ARE IDIOTS OUT THERE BESIDES ME WHO WOULD EVEN THINK OF BINDING A *SOUL* TO A *SUIT OF ARMOR*.

SO THERE ARE OTHERS LIKE MYSELF ON THE OUTSIDE?

OH?

I COULD JUST TELL BY THE FEEL.

I SPAR ALL THE TIME WITH A GUY LIKE YOU.

BUT MY NEW EMPLOYERS NEEDED THE SLICER'S SKILLS, SO THEY PULLED ME ASIDE FOR THEIR EXPERIMENTS.

NOW I SERVE AS THEIR GUARD DOG.

"48" WAS MY NUMBER ON DEATH ROW.

ALLOW ME TO TELL YOU A LITTLE *MORE* ABOUT MYSELF, THEN.

SO THAT MEANS, THERE MUST BE A SEAL THAT CONNECTS YOUR SOUL TO THE ARMOR, RIGHT?

IN MY PREVIOUS LIFE--OR RATHER WHEN I HAD A BODY OF FLESH AND BLOOD- I WAS THE KILLER KNOWN AS "***SLICER***."

OFFICIALLY, I WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN EXECUTED TWO YEARS AGO.

CLACK

HERE.

THE BLOOD RUNE IS IN MY HELM.

DESTROY THIS AND YOU WIN.

HM...I SEE I NEEDN'T EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO YOU.

I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT ALCHEMY, MYSELF...

...BUT APPARENTLY THE SOUL IS TIED TO THE BLOOD, AND THE IRON IN THE BLOOD BONDS WITH THE METAL IN THIS ARMOR.

IF YOU'RE ***THAT*** CONSIDERATE, MAYBE YOU'D BE NICE ENOUGH TO JUST LET ME GO?

JUST THOUGHT I'D ASK...

FWA HA HA! I ENJOY THE THRILL OF ***DANGER*** WHEN I BATTLE.

AND DON'T CALL ME OLD MAN.

CLINK

IT'S AWFULLY ***CONSID-ERATE*** OF YOU TO SHOW ME YOUR WEAK POINT, OLD MAN.

PLEASE...A
SERIAL KILLER
WOULD NEVER
SIT STILL AND LET
HIS PREY ESCAPE,
WOULD HE?

HERE I COME!
AND NOW...

OIL
Side Story:
The Military Festival

I WONDER WHO'S STRONGER, COLONEL MUSTANG OR EDWARD?

HEY..

IT ALL STARTED WITH A CASUAL CONVER-SATION...

SO YOU THINK ED WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE IN HAND-TO-HAND?

I HEARD HE'S A MASTER OF HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT AND HIS ALCHEMY SKILLS ARE SECOND TO NONE.

NO, DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE FULL-METAL.

THE COLONEL. DEFI-NITELY THE COLO-NEL.

IT SEEMS THAT THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF DISCUSSION HERE AT EASTERN HQ LATELY ABOUT WHETHER FULLMETAL OR MYSELF IS STRONGER.

DO YOU THINK I WOULD GET BENT OUT OF SHAPE OVER A *KID*?

DON'T BE RIDICU-LOUS.

DOES IT BOTHER YOU, COLO-NEL?

GAB

I WONDER WHO WOULD WIN.

I HEAR FULLMETAL'S WON SOME PRETTY IMPRESSIVE BATTLES LATELY.

GAB

GAB

HEY! DON'T FORGET THAT THE COLONEL WAS A ***WAR HERO*** DURING THE CIVIL WAR.

SOMEONE MAKE SOME BATTLE STATISTICS CARDS!

GAB

ACTUALLY, COLONEL, I'VE GOT EDWARD ON THE PHONE RIGHT NOW. HE'S IN TOWN FOR ASSESS-MENT.

IT'S TOO BAD YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WITNESS MY BRAVERY, BUT I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT.

IF YOU WANNA FIGHT BRING IT ON!!

HA!

ANYWAYS, EVEN IF I WANTED TO FIGHT HIM, FULLMETAL'S RUNNING AROUND SO MUCH, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FIND HIM.

SLAM

LISTEN! FIRST OF ALL, THE PRESIDENT WOULD ***NEVER*** ALLOW SUCH A THING!!

LT. COLONEL HUGHES IN CENTRAL IS NEGOTIATING FOR USE OF THE PARADE GROUNDS.

BUT IF TWO "HUMAN WEAPONS" LIKE US WERE TO COLLIDE, THERE WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT COLLATERAL DAMAGE TO THE SURROUNDING AREA..

WA HA HA!

GIVE HIM HELL, COLO-NEL!

GO AHEAD. I'LL ALLOW IT!

HA HA HA HA HA

HMM.. SOUNDS INTEREST-ING.

HA HA HA

MILITARY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
FÜHRER PRESIDENT
KING BRADLEY

WELCOME TO THE CENTRAL PARADE GROUNDS!

LADIES AND GENTLE-MEN!

WHO CARES !!?

MY DAUGHTER'S SECOND BIRTHDAY, YEAH!!

BOOOOO!!

FOR TODAY IS...

TODAY IS A MOMENT-OUS OCCA-SION...

BOO

GIVE ME BACK MY GIRL FRIEND

WHY WERE YOU THE ONLY ONE TO GET PROMOTED !!?

GET BACK TO WORK !!

GO TO HELL, FLA-ME

IGNORE

IN THE RED CORNER, THE **FLAME ALCHEMIST, ROY MUSTANG** !!

TODAY'S MAIN EVENT ~ **FLAME VS. FULLMETAL!!** THE FIRST-EVER STATE ALCHEMIST BATTLE ROYALE!!

OKAY! THERE AREN'T A LOT OF PAGES LEFT, SO LET'S GET ON WITH IT!

HURRY UP!

WAA AA AA AAH!

BIG BROTHER, DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE A CHANCE OF WINNING?

HEH HEH HEH... I NEVER DREAMED THAT I WOULD BE ABLE TO PUNCH THE COLONEL IN HIS SMUG FACE IN FRONT OF A CROWD.

WOO

DON'T CALL ME TINY !!

WHOA HE'S TINY !

SHE'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL !

AND IN THE BLUE CORNER!! THE FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST, EDWARD ELRIC!!

KNOCK HIM DEAD, SPROUT !

WASN'T THIS SUPPOSED TO BE AN ALCHEMY BATTLE..?

MWA HAHA HA HA!

I'LL CRUSH HIM WITH MY BARE FISTS !!

READY !

ZAH!

FOOM!

FIGHT!!

ARGH !!

SNAP

BOOM BOOM

RIGHT OFF THE BAT, HUH? DAMMIT !!

FWAM

IT MEANS YOU HAVE TO GET THE INITIATIVE TO ACHIEVE A QUICK VICTORY.

"A SOLDIER WHO STRIKES FAST STRIKES FIRST."

BOOM BOOM BOOM

HM...IT'S HARD TO HIT SUCH A *SMALL* TARGET.

DAAAH!

AIEEE!

BOOM!!

YOUCH!! YOJ'RE NOT HOLDING BACK AT ALL, ARE YOJ!!?

GRR!

DON'T CALL ME SMALL !!

EEP !

KRAKL

IT MEANS YOU SHOULDN'T LET THE ENEMY'S TAUNTS GET TO YOU.

SNAP

"AN ANGRY SOLDIER FIGHTS BLIND."

GWOOOOOO.

I CAN'T SEE ANY-THING WITH ALL THE SMOKE.

HM... MAYBE I OVERDID IT A BIT.

KABOOM

AAG GGH HH!

THERE HE (S)

FSSH..

BOOSH

!!

SUCKER

TCH
!
!
RIP
WHACK
LET'S SEE HOW TOUGH YOU ARE WITHOUT YOUR FLAMES!
ZA
SHAAA
VICTORY IS MINE!!
CRAP!
"A SOLDIER SHOULD KEEP DECEPTION IN HIS ARSENAL." MEANING, A ***SURPRISE ATTACK*** IS A LEGITIMATE STRATEGY, FULLMETAL.
GAH
DOOM
DOOM
MY ***LEFT GLOVE*** IS MADE OF REACTIVE CLOTH, TOO.
SO YOU'RE NOT SUCH A FOOL, AFTER ALL. BUT I'VE GOT BAD NEWS FOR YOU...
SLIDE

THIS MANGA WAS ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN GANGAN POWERED, SPRING 2002

WELL, THEN...

GRIN

GRIN

THANK YOU, SIR! I AM HONORED BY YOUR PRAISE.

THAT WAS A BRILLIANT BATTLE, COLONEL MUSTANG.

HRM... WELL DONE, WELL DONE.

TO THE ANKLE, NICE

BOOM

I MEEEES!

TOTAL DESTRUCTION

I KNEW THAT WAS COMING...

MAKE SURE EVERY ONE OF YOU HELPS TO CLEAN UP.

MAN—

THIS REALLY SUCKS.

HEY? WHERE'S LT. COLONEL HUGHES ?

QUIT SITTING THERE AND LIFT THAT SHOVEL, COLONEL!

SIGH

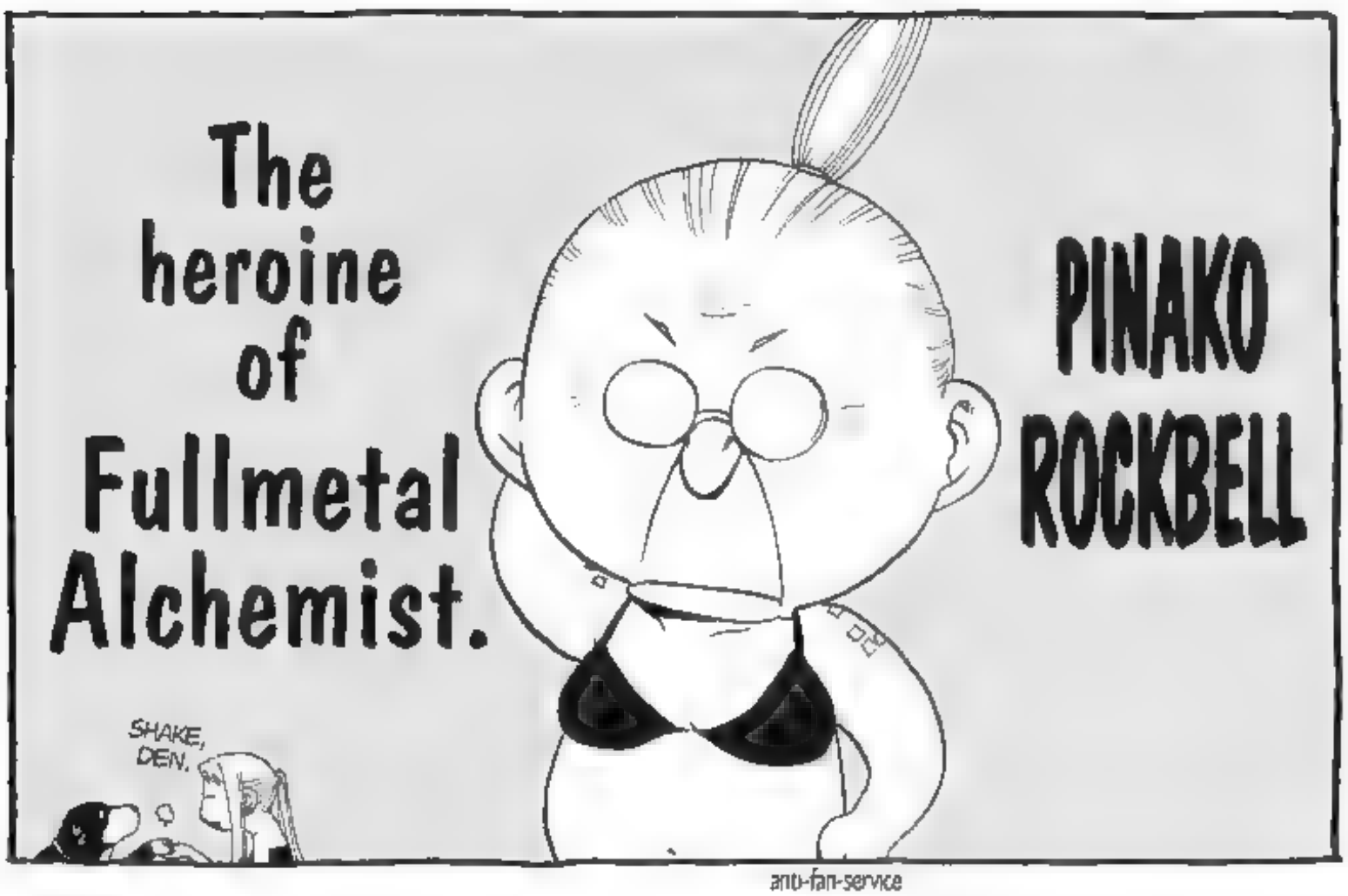
THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO HAVE THIS FIGHT!

END

"A SOLDIER SHOULD KNOW WHEN TO RETREAT."

HRM? LT. COLONEL, I THOUGHT YOU WERE AT THE PARADE GROUNDS TODAY?

To Be Continued in **Fullmetal Alchemist** Vol. 4...



anti-fan-service

AL'S BIG HAIRSTYLE STRATEGY

BRAIDS

Pippi Longstocking Style

TOPKNOT

Japanese Feudal Style

AFRO

?

LONG HAIR

Samurai Gone Wrong...

THE AMBITIOUS ALCHEMIST

GRUMBLE GRUMBLE

I DON'T WANNA GET INVOLVED WITH ANY POWER STRUGGLES.

HUH? REALLY? I DON'T THINK HE CAN DO IT.

COLONEL MUSTANG WANTS TO BECOME THE PRESIDENT.

MAYBE WE SHOULD ALLY OURSELVES WITH SOMEONE ELSE WHILE WE STILL CAN.

WHAT AM I TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH, YOU ASK..?

WHY DO YOU WANT TO TRY SOMETHING SO RISKY, COLONEL? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

...MUST WEAR *MINI-SKIRTS* !!

TA-DA!

I WANT TO CHANGE THE DRESS CODE SO THAT ALL WOMEN IN THE MILITARY.

I'LL FOLLOW HIM FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST 3

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

KEISUI TAKAEDA-SAN
SANKICHI HINODEYA-CHAN
JUN MORIYASU-SAN
MASANORI-SAN
JUNSHI BABA-SAN
YOICHI KAMITONO-CHAN
NANKAKUREMAN-SAN
NORIKO GUNJO-SAN
HASHIDA-KUN

YUICHI SHIMOMURA-SHI (MANAGER)

AND YOU!!

I Made Pinako's Hairstyle like This Just So I Could Do This Joke (Seriously!)

FIRST LET'S ZOOM IN.

TODAY, WE ARE GOING TO EXPLORE THE MYSTERY BEHIND PINAKO ROCKBELL'S HAIR-STYLE.

ZOOM IN CLOS-ER

MUCH, MUCH CLOS-ER

GLOOP...

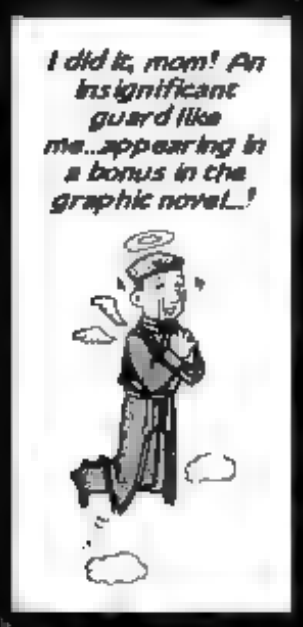
EW WW W W!

NATTO !!*

*NATTO = FERMENTED SOYBEANS

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST VOL. 4 AVAILABLE NOW!

NOTE: The characters are dressed like stereotypical Japanese gang members.



In Memoriam

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST ③

Hiromu Arakawa

Translation: Akira Watanabe

English Adaptation: Jake Forbes
Touch-up Art & Lettering: Wayne Truman

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THEY'RE GONE !!

...THOSE LITTLE BRATS!! HOW COULD THEY DO THIS TO US!?

OH, GOD... MAJOR ARMSTRONG'S GONNA CHEW US OUT BIG TIME FOR THIS!

I KNEW IT SEEMED A LITTLE *TOO* QUIET IN HERE.

WHERE ELSE ?!

HUH? WHERE TO?

LET'S GO !

KA SHING

Chapter 12: The Definition of Human

URR RA AH!

KLING KLAK KLING

WSH

WSH

WSH

WSH

SHING

MY SHOULDER FEELS DIS-JOINTED.

WHAT WAS THAT..?

SNAP

OH, GREAT! NOW I REMEMBER!!

"THIS TIME, I USED STEEL WITH A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF **CHROME** TO MAKE IT RUST-RESISTANT. BUT IT'S LESS DURABLE THIS WAY, SO DON'T BE TOO ROUGH ON IT."

I'D BETTER WRAP THIS UP QUICK!

VOOP

WHOA !!

SWOOSH

SPLIT

PLIP

PLIP

GRR..

KA

SHNK

SHUNK

V.V.

GASP...

BUT THAT ***WOUND*** AND YOUR ***EXHAUSTION*** WILL BE YOUR UNDOING.

KLAK

HAH HAH HAH! IT'S NICE TO HAVE SOME ***LIVELY*** PREY FOR ONCE.

WHAT DID YOU SAY!!?

JUST LIKE A MONKEY...

HUH?

HUH?

...HEY.

IS THIS ALLY OF YOURS ***STRONG*** ?

HE WON'T BE ABLE TO SAVE YOU.

YOUR FRIEND OUTSIDE IS BEING DEALT WITH BY MY ALLY, EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

BUT NOT AS STRONG AS ME

HE'S STRONG, ALL RIGHT.

THEN THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

HUP

AH HA HA !!

I'VE NEVER WON A FIGHT AGAINST HIM. *EVER.*

BAM

DOOOSH

DAAAAH!!!

WHY YOU...
!!

WHAK

...JUST SIT STILL...

...AND LET ME...

...CUT YOU UP ?!

WHAK

WHY WON'T YOU...

YOU BIG JERK !!

BAP

BWOOSH

CLAK

SHK

KRK

IT WON'T HURT THAT BAD !!

GAK

CLAK

WHAT DO YOU *EXPECT* ME TO SAY ..?

LUCKY !

HUH !?

SWAY

TRIP

KA CHNG

ALL RIGHT!
NOW TO CUT ME A SHOULDER ROAST!!

WHA?!

SNAP

YAMM

!?

WHAM

KRIK

YOU @*$%...

YOU MADE MY HEAD FALL OFF.

TONK

GEH HEH HEH... THERE WAS A LITTLE... INCIDENT.

YOUR BODY IS...

IT'S A STORY ABOUT A ***BUTCHER*** NAMED ***BARRY***.

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD IT BEFORE.

LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE STORY.

"ONCE UPON A TIME, IN CENTRAL CITY, THERE WAS A BUTCHER NAMED BARRY."

"BARRY LOVED TO CHOP UP MEAT MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD."

"BUT ONE DAY, WHEN BARRY GOT TIRED OF JUST CHOPPING UP COWS AND PIGS..."

"...HE FOUND SOMETHING NEW TO CHOP UP--***PEOPLE***. AND SO, HE WENT OUT NIGHT AFTER NIGHT IN SEARCH OF FRESH MEAT."

"EVENTUALLY, BARRY WAS CAUGHT, BUT NOT BEFORE HE HAD SLAUGHTERED 23 VICTIMS!!!"

"FOR TERRORIZING THE POOR PEOPLE OF CENTRAL CITY, BARRY WAS SENT STRAIGHT TO THE GALLOWS...

...AND EVERYONE LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER!"

AT LEAST, THAT'S THE VERSION THAT EVERYONE KNOWS.

THAT'S RIGHT! HE'S STANDING IN FRONT OF YOU RIGHT NOW!

I'M BARRY THE CHOPPER !!!

Y'SEE, BARRY DIDN'T ACTUALLY WIND UP ON THE GALLOWS LIKE HE WAS SUPPOSED TO.

BUT THERE'S ACTUALLY *MORE* TO THIS STORY.

SOME PEOPLE SPARED HIS LIFE ON THE CONDITION THAT HE GUARD A CERTAIN LOCATION.

BUT FIRST THEY TOOK AWAY HIS OLD *MEAT SACK* AND TRAPPED HIS SOUL INSIDE A *METAL* BODY.

WHO ?

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY YOU SEE A LIVING SUIT OF ARMOR!

OKAY, SO MAYBE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF ME, BUT AREN'T YOU A *LITTLE* SURPRISED BY MY BODY?

AGGH! WHAT A HICK!!

GAH!

I'M FROM A SMALL VILLAGE BACK EAST, SO I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY FAMOUS MURDERERS IN CENTRAL.

AAGGH!

CLACK

"WAAGHH!" OR *"AIEEE!"* OR *"HOW'D YOU DO THAT?!"* THROW ME A FRICKIN' BONE HERE!

CAN'T YOU AT LEAST SAY...

OH, SO YER JUST ANOTHER INMATE FROM DEATH ROW. DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!

WHAT A RELIEF!

FUME FUME

I'M NOT A CRIMINAL !!

WAAGHH! HOW'D YOU DO THAT?! YOU'RE A FREAK!

HEY...NOW YOU'RE HURTING MY FEELINGS...

...MY OLDER BROTHER TRANSMUTED MY SOUL INTO THIS ARMOR.

WHEN MY PHYSICAL BODY DISINTE-GRATED...

CLUNK

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, THEN?

YER NOT ?

SORRY, SORRY. IT'S NOTHING

BY THE WAY .. DO YOU ***TRUST*** YOUR BIG BROTHER ?

WHAT'S SO FUNNY ?

A BROTHER?! *GEH HEH HEH!* A BROTHER, HUH?!

GYA HYA HYA HYA !!

EVEN IF THAT LOVE AIN'T REAL!

MY, MY... AIN'T BROTHERLY LOVE BEAUTIFUL?

OF COURSE I DO.

HE RISKED HIS LIFE TO TRANSMUTE MY SOUL.

I MEAN, ARE YOU ***REALLY*** BROTHERS?

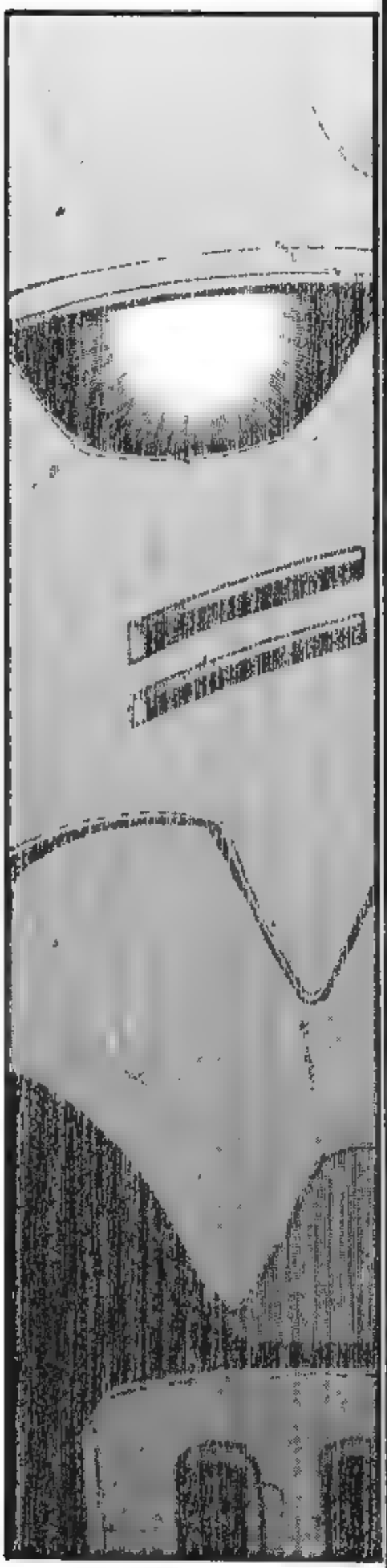
...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WHAT IF...

NO NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN!

OF COURSE! PEOPLE SAY OUR PERSONALITIES ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT, AND EVEN THOUGH I'M THE YOUNGER BROTHER, I'M TALLER THAN HE IS, BUT—

hmph



WHAT IF YOUR PERSONALITY AND MEMORIES WERE ALL FABRICATED BY YOUR "BIG BROTHER"?

GEH HA HA HA HA !!

TH...

THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE!! THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT I'M A HUMAN BEING NAMED ALPHONSE ELRIC!!

...THEN WHAT ABOUT YOU?!

YOU THERE, DON'T MOVE !!

SHF

THIS PLACE IS OFF LIMITS !!

THINK ABOUT IT! WHAT PROOF DO YOU HAVE THAT THIS HUMAN YOU CLAIM TO BE EVER EXISTED?!

WHERE'S YOUR MEAT ?!

WHAT THE HELL IS A "SOUL," ANYWAY? HOW CAN YOU PROVE IT EXISTS WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE IT?!

A

MAYBE YER BIG BROTHER AND THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU ARE ALL LYING TO YOU!!

WHAK

LEAVE IMMEDI--

SPLORK

SHUT UP.

WHAT ABOUT ME, YOU ASK?

THAT'S EASY !!

SPLOOSH

EVEN IF YOUR FRIEND *DID* DEFEAT MY ALLY AND IS HEADED THIS WAY, THIS BUILDING IS HARD TO NAVIGATE.

I LOVE TO KILL SO MUCH I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!

LOVE TO CHOP UP THE FLESH OF LIVING PEOPLE!!

GRAHA HA HA

I KILL, THEREFORE I AM!!

THAT'S ALL THE PROOF I NEED TO KNOW THAT I EXIST!!

GRAHA HA HA HA

HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT HERE IN TIME.

..YOU THINK SO, HUH?

AL !!

NOW !!

PEEK

VS.H

WHAT ?!

WHEN DID HE... ?!

A TRICK !!

SLASH

NNH... THAT WASN'T FAIR..!

ALL'S FAIR IN A FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

CLONK

CLNK TNK

KLATA KLATA

BAM

THAT'S BETTER..

KRIK KRIK

BSHOOM

WHY BOTHER? NOW THAT I'VE CUT OFF THE ***HEAD***, WHERE YOUR SOUL IS, THE ***BODY*** IS JUST A LUMP OF METAL.

WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU STILL HAVEN'T DESTROYED MY BLOOD RUNE.

HURRY UP AND FINISH M-

HEY !

YOINK

...THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE ?

PLUS, THERE'S SOMETHING THAT I NEED TO ASK YOU ABOUT.

NEVER.

TELL ME ***EVERY-THING*** YOU KNOW ABOUT IT.

HAH HAH HAH HAH !

CUT THE TOUGH GUY ACT. YOU'RE HARDLY IN A POSITION TO ARGUE, LOSER.

CLANK

I HAVEN'T LOST YET.

SHUK

CLINK

IT CAN'T BE !!

...

GASHANG
GASHANG

NO ONE SAID THERE COULD ONLY BE *ONE* SOUL FOR ONE SUIT OF ARMOR.

THE HEAD AND THE BODY ARE *SEPAR-ATE*?

LOUSY CHEAT...!

...THEY FOUND OUT THERE WERE *TWO* KILLERS. WE'RE BROTHERS.

I FORGOT TO MENTION THIS, BUT WHEN THEY CAUGHT "SLICER"..

INDEED. OUR JOB TO ELIMINATE ANY INTRUDERS WHO TRESPASS HERE COMES FIRST. SORRY, WE'RE JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS.

WHO SAID, "ALL'S FAIR IN A FIGHT TO THE DEATH"?

SHWOO

LET US BEGIN ROUND TWO, LITTLE MAN!

BUT JUDGING BY THOSE SHAKY LEGS, I DON'T THINK THAT'S VERY LIKELY! WA HA HA HA!!

OH...BEFORE WE BEGIN, LET ME FOLLOW MY BROTHER'S EXAMPLE AND SHOW YOU THE LOCATION OF MY BLOOD RUNE.

GRR..

DON'T UNDER-ESTI-MATE..

SEE IT? MY BLOOD RUNE IS *HERE*! AIM WELL IF YOU WANT TO DESTROY ME!

CLAP

DASH

NOT THIS TIME! I'M NOT GIVING YOU A CHANCE TO TRANSMUTE !!

WSH

SWSH

HWOOOO

I'M REALLY STARTING TO GET DIZZY..

DAMMIT.. I'VE LOST TOO MUCH BLOOD.

WHAM

AGH... GG... GGK !

DIE
!!!

THIS IS BAD! REALLY BAD!

AM I GOING TO DIE HERE ?

DIE... ?

DIE...

TMP

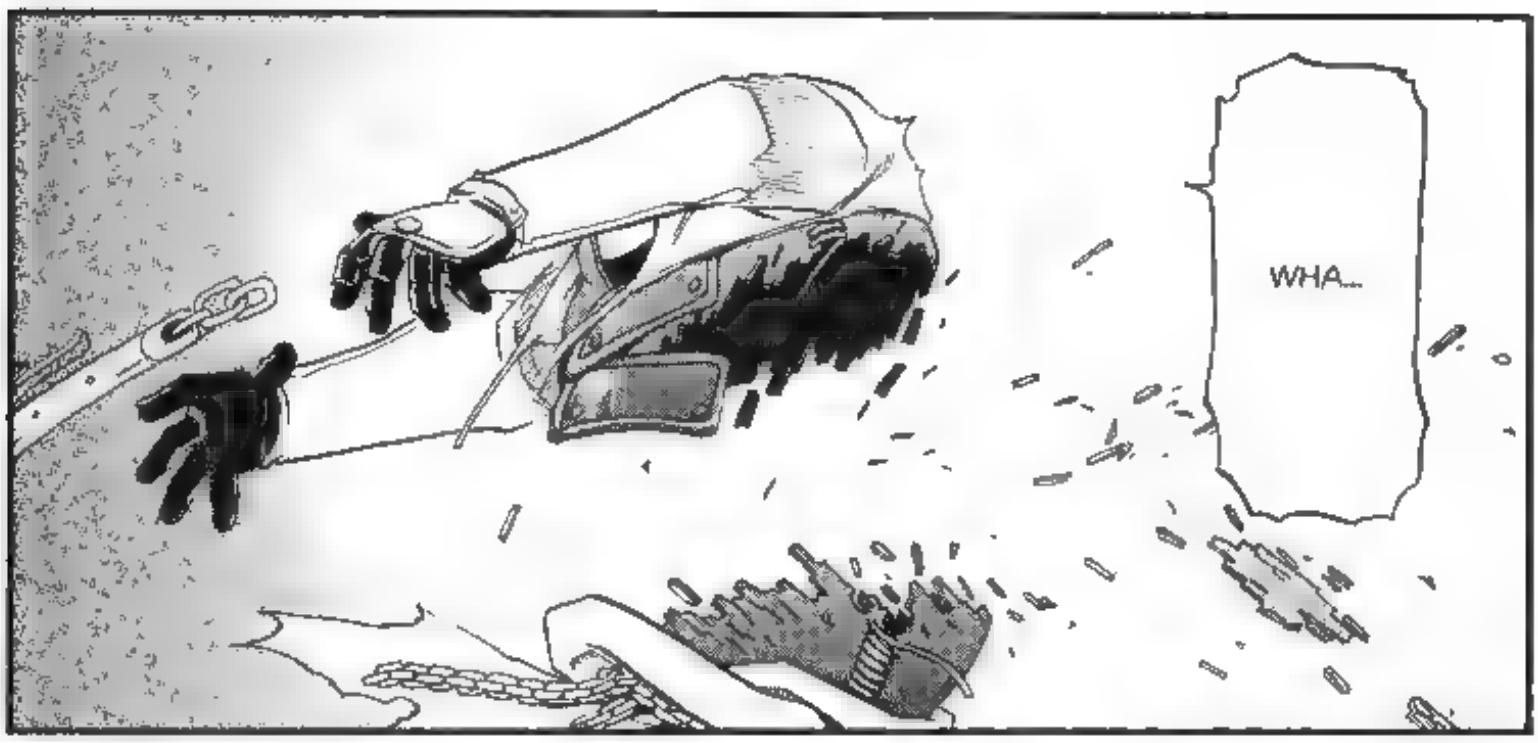
CLAP
WORK, DAMMIT...
KRIK
I TOLD YOU THAT I WOULDN'T GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO TRANSMUTE !!

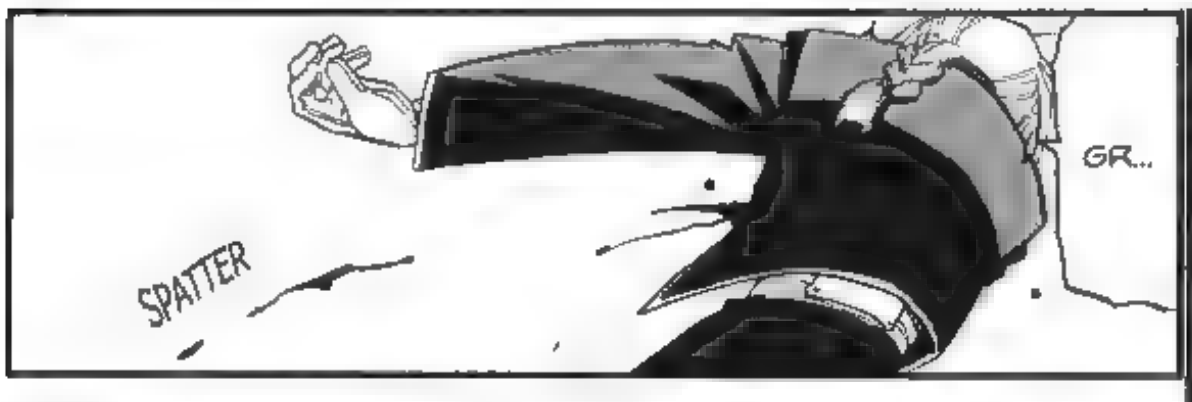
SHLASH
!URRRAAAHHH!

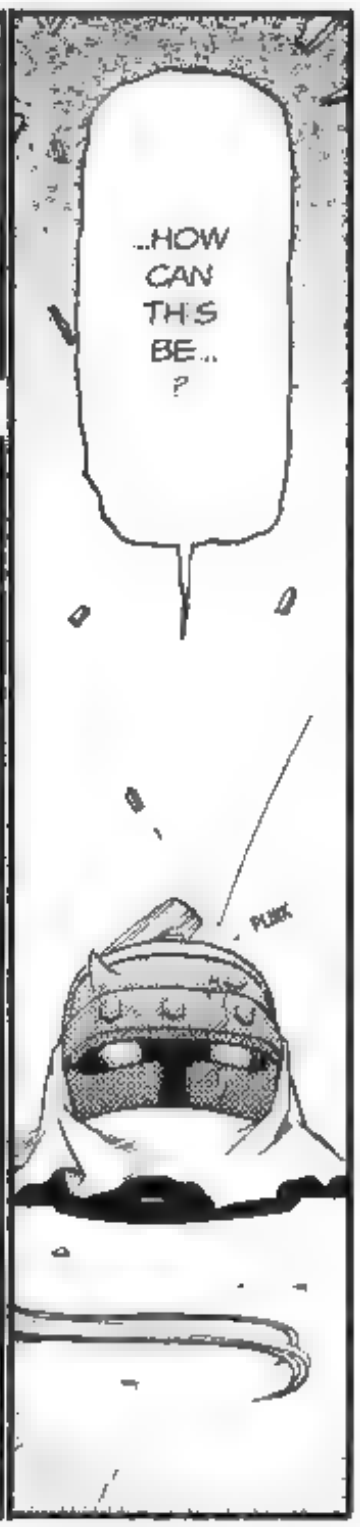
THONK

BS
SH
I JUST REMEMBERED THIS GUY I DON'T LIKE.

KA
BOOM


WHA...


SPATTER
GR...


..HOW CAN THIS BE...?
FUNK

AH.. OW..
SLIDE

GATUNK TUNK TUNK
TMP

FLOP FLOP

EEEW!! THAT'S TOO WEIRD !!

YURK!

TWITCH TWITCH

TWITCH TWITCH

DAMN IT! HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO ME, YOU LITTLE BRAT!!?

YOU'RE NOT GONNA SAY THAT YOU GUYS ARE ACTUALLY *THREE BROTHERS*, ARE YOU?

NO, NO..

HM...

I HATE TO ADMIT IT, LITTLE BROTHER, BUT WE'VE LOST.

B-BIG BROTHER...!

THIS TIME YOU REALLY WON.

HMM... THAT WAS PRETTY AMAZING, KID.

HURRY UP AND DESTROY US AND LEAVE THIS PLACE.

THAT I CANNOT DO.

THEN THIS TIME YOU'D BETTER TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.

I WON'T BE A *MURDERER.*

I DIDN'T TELL YOU TO *KILL* US, BUT TO *DESTROY* US.

HOW CAN YOU CALL US *HUMAN* WITH BODIES LIKE *THESE?*

HMPH. HOW NAIVE.

...THEN I WOULD BE SAYING THAT I DON'T CONSIDER MY BROTHER HUMAN, EITHER.

IF I WERE TO ACCEPT THAT YOU GUYS AREN'T HUMAN...

YOUR BROTHER?

"I COULD JUST TELL BY THE FEEL."

"I SPAR ALL THE TIME WITH A GUY JUST LIKE YOU."

MY YOUNGER BROTHER IS HUMAN, AND SO ARE YOU GUYS.

I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU.

HA HA HA HA !

..HA HA HA HA..

HEH..

HA HA HA HA! HOW IRONIC !!

BIG BROTHER ?

...EVEN THOUGH WE WERE LOOKED DOWN UPON AND CALLED SOULLESS DEVILS.

MY BROTHER AND I HAVE ROBBED, DESTROYED AND KILLED EVER SINCE WE CAN REMEMBER. WE'VE SURVIVED ALL THESE YEARS...

KID! YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE STONE, RIGHT?

!

HA HA HA HA! HOW VERY AMUSING !

ONLY NOW THAT OUR HUMAN BODIES ARE GONE AND OUR SOULS ARE ALL THAT REMAINS DOES SOMEONE TREAT US AS HUMAN.

THIS WILL BE MY FAREWELL GIFT TO YOU, KID.

I'LL TELL YOU EVERY-THING!

PLUS, WE'VE DIED ONCE ALREADY... WHAT IS THERE TO BE AFRAID OF AT THIS POINT?

THEY'LL DESTROY US ANYWAY FOR FAILING TO ELIMINATE THE INTRUDER.

BIG BROTHER! IF WE TELL HIM, THEY'LL ***DESTROY*** US!!

ARGH !!

THEN THERE'S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT !!

BUT AS I TOLD YOU BEFORE, I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT ALCHEMY. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE.

THEY ARE--

WHO ARE THEY ?!

NAMELY, THE ONES WHO ORDERED US TO GUARD THIS PLACE...

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE ***STONE***, BUT I ***DO*** KNOW ABOUT THOSE WHO ***MADE IT***.

SHUNK

TH...

SHOOP

THAT WAS TOO CLOSE.

!!

...

AR.GH...

NOW, NOW, 48. DON'T TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT DON'T CONCERN YOU.

WHAT'S THE ***FULLMETAL RUNT*** DOING HERE?

OH MY...

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